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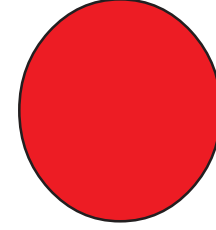
Divine Life of Jogi Swami

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On This Pious Occasion



The great revered saint Shree Jogi Swami, who has now become one with the God for ever, is a crown of Swaminarayan Sampraday of our time. The life of saints, ever engrossed in the Supreme God, becomes the guide-line for the saintly-hood. The life of Jogi Swami is also a great blessing and the best guide for us on the path of ultimate salvation.

We are lucky to have a chance to live with such a great saint. His life inspires strong devotion in us. His silent blessings award success to all our efforts and programmes. His strict regimen of saintliness is really wonderful even at such an old age over 100 years. With his service to the elder saints, creation of temples, wearing of floral garlands for the God, his devotion and penance, his uniform life adorned with 'Vratas', Jogi Swami has attained the Murti of Shree Hari. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami has narrated the characteristics of great saints in 'Bhakta-Chintamani'. Shree Jogi Swami has attained all these characteristics in his life.

Shree Jogi Swami has achieved total grace of his 'Guru' Shree Mahant Swami and has served the 'Satsang' according to the wish of Param Pujya Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. Thus the life of Jogi Swami has become the source of inspiration for innumerable devotees. As the life sketches of great revered 'Nand Saints' and other rare Saintly personalities is beneficial for the people seeking salvation, the life story of Param Pujya Jogi Swami will definitely prove a great boon to the Satsang.

With the compilation of so many inspiring incidents and events of the life of a great word accomplished saint Shree Jogi Swami, Shastri Shree Madhavpriyadasji has done a commendable work. After the departure of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj for Akshardham, we both have gained good-luck to follow his foot-prints supplementary to each other. I feel pleasure that Shastri Madhavpriyadasji has, despite his tight time schedule, spared time to write and compile this book.

This book will provide invaluable strength to several people for life. To write the biography of Shree Jogi Swami is a strenuous work and it is not possible without faithfulness, concentrated confidence and reverence. Shastri Madhavpriyadasji has incomparable love, respect and oneness towards Shree Jogi Swami. Therefore he has nicely knitted the flower-like life incidents of Shree Jogi Swami and has created a floral garland in the form of this book and has presented it at the lotus-feet of Bhagawan Shree Hari.

The pious incidents of the life of such a saint make one to remember Shree Hari as his entire life was devoted to Shree Hari. Constant awareness of the commands of Shree Hari and oneness with His Murti, are the main characteristics of the life of Shree Jogi Swami. Such a grand life can prove a miraculous medicine for thousands of people, enabling them to improve their lives. With his faithful service to Shree Jogi Swami, Shree Vishwavihari Swami has earned his blessings.

Shree Hari Himself has said about the great saintly personalities:

‘As my great saint is to me, none is equal to him’.

‘The God says he is everything to me’.

These words of Shree Muktanand Swami are really suit to the attachment-less great saint Shree Jogi Swami.

Let us pray to Shree Hari that compassion, penance, saintliness, meditation and detachment of Shree Jogi Swami may descend in our life.

My lacs of salutations to the great revered saint Shree Jogi Swami!

With Jay Swaminarayan,

- Kothari Devkrushnadasji Swami



Regards to a Revered Saint

The strength of renunciation and detachment, total attachment to and devotion to Shree Hari and great achievement of word accomplishment, these are the three main characteristics of Gunatit tradition developed in Swaminarayan Sampraday. All these characteristics can be seen in the life of Pujya Jogi Swami Shree Hariprakashdasji. Grace of Shree Hari, hearty blessings of Guruvarya Mahant Swami and inspirations of the great Saint Shastri Shree Dharmajivandasji are the main forces that molded Jogi Swami's greatness.

By moving Mala for hours together and sitting before the Murti of Shree Hari, by remembrance and meditations, Shree Jogi Swami has accomplished concentration in the Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan. He has attained such a strength that he can sit before the Murti of the God for many hours without any support. Due to such an accomplishment of constant remembrance of Bhagawan Shree Hari, no worldly thought enters his mind and occasionally he can have the 'Darshsan' of Shree Hari in his clean and sacred heart. The Supreme God hears his prayers and fulfils his pious and benevolent wishes. Despite achieving such very high state of accomplishment, he has nothing like ego in his heart. Without any hypocrisy or show of his accomplishment, he remains ever ready to remove the miseries of the unhappy and grieved people. At the request of innocent villagers he examines the land for water reserves therein for their wells, hand pumps and bore-wells. The God invariably springs water at the place directed by him. He gives vows of

keeping fast on Hari Jayanti or of cleaning the temple to the people desirous of having sons and he requests the God to fulfill the wishes of those people. On fulfillment of their desires, the devout develop unique regards towards this Saint. On such occasion also he never wishes to be praised or worshipped. He joins the devout to the God and not to himself. He makes the people abandon addictions and gives them the vows of remembering the God. He suggests herbal medicines to the sick people and with the help of unshakable faith in the God; he removes the miseries and diseases of the people.

The life style of this true Saint is totally adorned with penance and renunciation similar to the olden day Saints and he is like an ornament of saintliness. In renunciation of wealth and woman, this Saint has always remained unshakable. *'The whole world is engaged in wealth and woman, the person who keeps himself detached is a two-handed God.* In this sense, he is a great and rare Saint.

Insistent of observance of religion, Pujya Jogi Swami always remains alert in observing of good conduct. As he likes to do penance, he observes fasts without food or water, at least for five days in a month. He constantly remembers Shree Hari. He strictly believes in forsaking tastes and therefore he never takes sugar or sugar crystals in his food. He gives 'Prasadi' of sugar crystals to all but he never puts even a crystal into his mouth. He has continued offering sugar crystals to devotees. The devotees coming for his 'Darshan' continue to bring packs of sugar crystals which he distributes to all.

Capable Saint Sadguru Purani Swami Gopinathdasji was considered to be the Guru of Durbar community. He used to inspire the princes (Durbars) to give up addictions. His disciple Mahant Swami was also duly being respected by Durbar community and used to make them alert to proper observance of the rules of the religion. His disciple Jogi Swami is also respected by the Durbars. Jogi Swami, without pampering anybody, always preaches the Durbars to be vigilant in proper observance of the tenets of religion and also to forsake addictions. Durbars also act according to the beneficial advice of this Saint who constantly remains engrossed in the devotion of God.

Jogi Swami is always eager to travel for the 'Darshan' of Deities in temples. He may either be in Rajkot Gurukul or in Junagadh Gurukul; he would go for the 'Darshan' of the Deities in temple on foot daily. Thereafter, in his old age, he used to go for the 'Darshan' of the God and deities at the time of evening 'Aarti' in some devotee's car without fail. On the occasion of 'Patotsav' (anniversary of Murti Pratishtha) he would certainly go for the 'Darshan' of the God in that temple.

Jogi Swami has not undertaken any 'Sadhana' (practice) of 'Ashtang Yog'. But the Swami has successfully practiced constant meditation of the Murti of Shree Hari and in this way he has proved his name 'Jogi', a worthy name given by his Guru Mahant Swami,

Some incidents of this great Saint, who is by nature kind, affectionate and having no enemy in this world, had been collected by Sadhu Vishwavihari Swami. Apart from that the

erudite Shastri Shree Madhavpriyadasji Swami, who happened to have many years of association with Jogi Swami, has compiled some more anecdotes with unique devotion and prepared this scripture namely 'Jogi Swami ni Jivan Gatha' which is really a commendable act of service on his part. Laxmanbhai Aadroja has also provided good support in preparing this scripture. I have also got opportunity to provide somewhat suitable support in publication of this scripture which I consider my great fortune and feel myself fulfilled.

The reading of this scripture 'Jogi Swami ni Jivan Gatha' will inspire 'Satsang' in the devotees. It would create a unique image of pious, God oriented and the benevolent life of that great Saint in the hearts of devotees who would feel themselves fulfilled. With true reverence of my heart and with all regards I salute this rare Saint.

- Sadhu Laxminarayandas



Regards to a Great Saint ..

The land of India is fortunate. It has been sanctified by the foot-prints of many saints. It is blessed with the births of many great saints and particularly the saintly group of Swaminarayan Sampraday has established its own specialty. During the time of Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan, and also thereafter, the contribution of saints, who were and who are full of religious knowledge, detachment, devotion and steadfastness to the religious tenets, in the development and enhancement of Swaminarayan Sampraday is very important and unparalleled. In this wonderful and pious lineage of the saints, the life of that revered Jogi Swami, Shree Hariprakashdasji, who remains constantly engrossed in devotion, is unique.

“In the land of India, either incarnation of God or His saint, certainly reside”. These words of Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan in ‘Vachanamrut’ have been proved worthy by the reverend saint Shree Jogi Swami.

In the beginning, Jogi Swami served in the Garden and by preparing garlands devotionally and by dedicating them to the God, fulfilled the line of that ‘Kirtan’: ‘God, you are the garland of my heart’ and who has really established God in his heart with reverence and who constantly remains engrossed in the God is Jogi Swami.

Sadguru Brahmanand Swami has sung in his ‘Kirtan’ for saints like Jogi Swami : who have become totally one with

Shree Hari with the devotion and meditation of Murti of the God:

‘Your Murti is the ornament of my eyes,
And also a garland of my heart’

God’s Murti has become the ornament of the eyes for Jogi Swami and garland of his heart.

And that’s why his heart becomes full of compassion on seeing somebody suffering, and at that time, the God residing in his heart, makes his speak true. Many such incidents have been narrated in this scripture. Shreeji Himself has said:

‘By residing in the heart of such saint, I give salvation to many souls’.

God Himself fulfills Swami’s divine wishes and blessings. Reverend Jogi Swami has unique aim to lead many souls to God but not unto himself.

Pujya Jogi Swami didn’t go to school, yet due to the constant listening of ‘Vachanamrut,’ he can tell immediately about which topic comes in which ‘Vachanamrut’. I myself also have got the benefit of such special ability of Swami many times. He is completely detached from the worldly pleasures and the worldly objects and constantly remains in the company of God through devotion and meditation. Swami doesn’t know the notes of rupees and he didn’t care to know it. Such detached and rare saint is the reverend Jogi Swami.

Swami has known the real wealth. According to the line ‘God, you are my real wealth,’ this saint who constantly remains

engrossed in the devotion of God, in the real sense, believes the God is his real wealth.

It is worth noting that Swami Shree Vishwaviharidasji, who is in the service of this great saint, has gathered different life incidents of reverend Jogi Swami diligently for this book and Shree Laxmanbhai Aadroja has beautifully compiled the same.

Various life incidents regarding penance, asceticism, service orientation, egolessness, desirelessness, straightforwardness and simplicity of this great saint have been described interestingly by reverend erudite Shastri Swami Shree Madhavpriyadasji with due reverence and devotion of heart which would be inspirational and helpful for the salvation loving people.

‘Always remain engaged in the devotion and also do the meditation of God, the great saints who are with such magnificent virtues, I salute to them’.

- Mahendra Nandlal Shelat

Editor, ‘Sadvidya’



A Taste of Godliness

Swaminarayan Sampraday is a mine of great saints. Swaminarayan Sampraday is a great garden full of fragrance of flowers in the form of saints. Swaminarayan Sampraday is such a place where thirst of salvation loving people can be satisfied, such a tree where the hearts suffering from the heat of the affliction get satiated, where tired would get the rest and the hungry people would get sweet fruit in the form of salvation.

In the tradition of ‘Satsang’ we can see a series of great and able saints who dedicated their everything on the words of Shree Hari. One bead of the garland, which is the ornament of the neck of Shree Hari, means our very reverend Jogi Swami Shree Hariprakashdasji Swami.

Pleased with his way of living, Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan Himself showers the rain of his compassion on him, the elder saints shower their blessings on him, such a great and rare saint is Pujya Jogi Swami. What-so-ever we write about him would be insufficient to describe his holiness. Who is not attracted to the life of this great saint? Either uneducated or erudite, poor or rich, local or foreigner, notorious or devotee, patient or self-indulgent, whosoever he may be, once he has the ‘Darshan’ of Swami, and has tasted the pious water of ‘Abhishek’ of God then for him it would be like invaluable experience of life.

As said in the Purushottam Prakash:

‘A saint moving in his own country or abroad removes the Sins of all the living beings.

Whosoever had his 'Darshan,' he would attain the salvation'. The words coming from inner depths of the heart of Jogi Swami, naturally and obviously come true because it is the promise of Shree Hari:

"Because I reside in that saint, I do not stay away from the real saint, that's why the saint is able to bestow salvation and many people may be awarded salvation through him".

The consistency in the way of living, since beginning, inspires the strength in the salvation loving people. At such an old age his persistence for observing the rules (of Satsang) is a lesson to learn for the salvation loving people about remaining very vigilant if they wish to attain God.

If a thirsty person wandering in wood gets water, if a person exhausted due to burning heat and gets the soothing shadow of a tree, if a person drowning in the middle of the sea gets the support of a boat, then how much pleasure he would get? Even more divine pleasure one would get with 'Darshan', touch and 'Poojan' (worship) of the reverend Jogi Swami.

Whosoever has experienced such bliss, can not remain silent about the Swami's incidents which are full of inspiration.

Shree Vishwavahari Swami has rendered an inspiring service to a great saint Jogi Swami, who has opened the door of salvation. By writing the life incidents of Jogi Swami, erudite saint Sadguru Shastri Madhavpriyadasji Swami has presented an invaluable gift to the salvation loving people. My hearty regards to such a great saint of Gunatit tradition.

- Laxmanbhai Aadroja

Editor : 'Sanskardeep'

~ PREFACE ~

Great Saint

In the 'Vachanamrut' of 'Vadtal-19' Shree Hari Himself has said, "When a soul takes human birth in 'Bharat-khand' (India), either an incarnation of God or saint of God, would be on the earth. If soul can recognise Him, then that soul would be a devotee of God and that soul can attain supreme bliss."

We are very lucky that, when we have got human body, we have got company of such a great saint Jogi Swami who remains engrossed in the God all time.

It is a great fortune for me to write the life story of the great pious saint Pujya Jogi Swami. He is an ideal saint of divine Gunatit lineage of saints.

Great able saint Shree Balmukunddasji Swami was a disciple of Aksharmurti Sadguru Shree Gunatitanandji Swami. Shree Balmukunddasji Swami's disciple was Sadguru Swami Shree Dharmaswarupdasji Swami. Swami Shree Gopinathdasji became the disciple of Shree Dharmaswarupdasji Swami. Sadguru Swami Shree Krishnajivandasji became the disciple of Swami Shree Gopinathdasji. Swami Shree Krishnajivandasji who was known as Mahant Swami was elder Guru Brother of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. Pujya Jogi Swami became an able disciple of Mahant Swami.

The original name of Jogi Swami is Swami Shree Hariprakashdasji, but hardly anybody now knows him by that name.

Due to his sheer detachment and desire-less state and his continuous and undivided engrossment in the Murti of Shree Hari, Sadguru Mahant Swami (his Guru) himself called him 'Jogi'.

In 'Yoga-Sutra', Maharshi Patanjali has given the definition of the word 'Yoga' as 'Yogas-chittvrtirnirodhah', 'Yoga' means control over one's mind and desires similarly one's total devotion in the form of Shree Hari with option-less reverence is also Yoga. In 'Vachanamrut' Shree Hari has approved this by saying that 'yoga means undivided attention into the Murti of the God'.

Such type of 'Yoga' is naturally accomplished by Jogi Swami. Therefore his name 'Jogi' is appropriate.

Jogi Swami is a unique saint. He has been totally dedicated to the God for his entire life and detached from the worldly things.

Amongst various service activities of Gurudev, he has kept us alert against indulging ourselves in worldly matters, knowingly or unknowingly, creating any type of attachment towards the worldly things. In Bhagawat Gita Bhagawan Shree Krishna has sung the glory of 'Anasakta Yoga' (doing things without indulging self in the same). As one shall do the domestic worldly deeds without being indulged in them, the services relating to the religion should also be done the same way. Because, both types of activities, done without 'Anasakt Yoga' can create bondage.

Jogi Swami has remained totally detached and he has inspired us to remain detached. At the time of inauguration of Shree Swaminarayan Gurukul Vishwavidya Pratishthanam Chharodi, Jogi Swami had warned me in his unique style, 'While doing service activities, don't indulge yourself any-where'. These words of Jogi Swami have become the motto of my life.

When attitude of detachment is forgotten in the sphere of religion, many vices would take place in it.

Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan has explained two types of activities. One is relating to the God and the other is relating to the domestic worldly affairs. He has given the name 'Seva' (service) to the activities relating to God.

As such, both activities appear to be similar but one is motivated by the spirit of dedication and other is motivated by self-interest.

What we do for self is work and what we do to please the God is service. Even in service, if ego of the doer is there, the service would be polluted. Therefore, the service also should be free from egoism; otherwise such service would create bondage.

There is a third way also which is practiced by the great sages like Shuk, Sanaka etc. It is named '*Nivrutti*' way. This way of life is spirituality oriented. In this way of life, the activities would be limited to maintenance of life only. Except this, activities would be negligible. Continuous thinking of soul and undivided attachment to God are main characteristics of this path.

Despite being a saint of 'Nivrutti Marg' (willingly retirement from worldly activities) for the practicing of nine types of devotion, he has created temples, has rendered his services in the flower gardens and has provided inexhaustible strength of inspiration for the various services of Gurukul.

Jogi Swami is a saint, continuously attached to the God. We have never seen him passing even a moment without the remembrance of Shree Hari. He has done devotion day and night and has also made others to do so.

What Jogi Swami is today, is due to the grace of his Guru (preceptor) and devotion he has done.

The form of Shree Hari is (*Nirgun*) beyond attributes. Any characteristic (*Satva-Rajas-Tam*) can't touch that form and the saint pursuing the devotion of such form would also become without attributes like Shree Hari. Due to the continuous devotion of the divine form of Shree Hari, Jogi Swami has attained 'state' of being.

In the life of Jogi Swami, the penance is incomparable. His thin body is like the physical form of Penance. The vows like 'Dharna-Parna', 'Ektana', Fasts, have become integral part of his life. In short his life is like a sheet, woven with devotion and penance.

Kabir says, "The sheet is wet with the essence of devotion to Shree Ram".

Meera say, "O my beloved Shyam, please dye my scarf".

Muldas has sung in his Bhajan, 'The great saint has come to wear the scarf of the beloved God'.

The life of Jogi swami is just like a shawl of the beloved God, like an incarnation of forsaking and detachment. Jogi Swami can't recognise rupee notes. He does not keep money and does not make others to keep, yet only with his presence, the service activities requiring crores of rupees have got momentum. Thousands of people have got food and education and have won freedom from the fear of the cycle of birth and death.

With the continuous devotion to Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan and the grace of great Sadguru Mahant Swami, Jogi Swami has achieved divine powers. Many miracles which have been narrated in this book occurred due to that divine power, but it is more surprising that Swami has never used that power for himself. He has used this divine accomplishment for removing the miseries of the people only.

Despite absence of any divinity, by creating various networks with so called miracles, some people resort to many tricks to get money and respect. However despite being a saint full of divine power, Jogi Swami has never wished to get money or respect. Swami has remained away from self-praise or self-worship.

Once I uttered few words about his greatness in the presence of Jogi Swami, after the assembly was over, I went to him for his Darshan. Swami was sitting on a jute-bag behind Sadhu Ashram.

Swami said to me, "O Sadhu! You should not slander me".

With a smile I said, “Swami! Am I so unfortunate to slander you?”

Swami said, “You have praised me in the assembly and that is like slandering me. Once I had praised Mahant Swami in the assembly as you have done today. At that time Mahant Swami had scolded me saying, ‘Jogi, you should not slander me’. And see Shastri, if you praise me, the people would get crowded here. They would have different desires. Some would have desire of having a son; some would have desire of having wealth. Everyone in the world wants worldly things. None wants to attain God. What is the use of gathering such crowds? We don’t want anything from them. What can they give us? They can give money or respect. We don’t need it. That can create bondage. There is no wealth bigger than the Murti of Shreeji Maharaj in this world. If many people gather around, one may forget devotion. Therefore, you should not slander me”.

Each word of the Swami touched my inner heart. We may have many saints but we can’t find such a desire-less saint. My faith towards him is not due to his divinity and divine experiences. The centre of my faith in him lies in his incomparable desirelessness and his unbroken attachment with the God.

The Vedas have described three types of desires. They are (1) the desire for son (progeny) (2) the desire for wealth and (3) the desire for the acclamation from the people.

Muktanand Swami says: whosoever gives up these three desires is intelligent and he knows the meaning of scriptures.

Jogi Swami is a ‘Paramahans’, totally free from all types of desires.

Several saints and Haribhaktas had intense desire that a book containing the life of Shree Jogi Swami should be published so that innumerable devout can get more inspiration and strength to go ahead on the path of salvation.

I had an intense desire in my heart that Pujya Jogi Swami is a soul of our spiritual faith and divine experiences he had in his life should be compiled in the form of a book and it should be dedicated at his feet. But to spare time for the same was a great problem for me. Amidst constant moving in the Satsang and the burden of various service activities, it was difficult to find suitable time.

At last I decided to spare some days any how to live with Jogi Swami for the writing. At that time Swami was living in Rajkot Gurukul. I sat at the feet of the Swami to write. Peaceful solitary place and pious presence of the Swami were the natural source of inspiration for me.

While the writing was going on, the Swami kept moving the Mala. Vihari Swami said to Jogi Swami, “Swami! In that corner Madhavpriya Swami is writing on the life and experiences of Mahant Swami and yourself”.

With natural childlike innocence, Swami said “Oh! Then it is very good”. These words of Swami were like a shower of nectar for me.

I stopped writing and went near Swami. He was looking towards me compassionately and started laughing. I consider that laughing with pleasure the biggest prize of my life. That small incident was very precious for me.

To more sanctify the writing, I remember Mahant Swami. I also remembered Muljibhagat of Gundasara village and Kalu Bhagat of Kanek. The Swami was also gladly supporting me in recollecting the incidents.

When I recollected the incident of Dholara, where Maharaj had shown the place having water under earth, Swami said, "Shastri! Water may be available or may not but one thing is sure that Maharaj has not forgotten me".

When I remembered the incident of Gondal when on the 'Nimi Ekadashi' (eleventh day of first half of Ashadha month) at night Maharaj had given him 'Darshan', describing form of that Murti, Swami said "Shastri it was 'Nimi Ekadashi'. Maharaj had worn white clothes, white 'Dhoti', white 'Khes' (a scarf or piece of cloth worn round the shoulder) and white turban".

For me that conversation with the Swami was natural and live ritual of dedication of this book.

Jogi Swami is always happy with the happiness of Shree Hari. Whether this 'Gatha' (book) would be written or not, he does not bother. Swami is totally aloof from such things, like a Lotus in the water. The people who come in contact with the Swami are witness to this thing.

At this age, Swami has wiped out all the remembrances except the Murti of Shree Hari.

It can be said in general that this book would prove an inspiring thing for several people, but if I say from my heart this book has been written for my pleasure only as the great saint Tulsidasji has said - '*Swantahsukhay*' while writing '*Ramcharit Manas*'.

I have read Bhagawat Katha and have given discourses many a times. I have written articles on many subjects, but continuous writing of such book has never been done by me before.

This book is just like a lotus sprouted in the lake of reverence in my heart and I feel myself most fortunate to dedicate this lotus at the lotus feet of Pujya Swami and Shree Hari in the life time of Pujya Swamiji. For the purpose of writing this book, I have got proximity of great and capable saint Jogi Swami. I consider it my great fortune.

As per the terminology of literature, perhaps this work may not be considered as a book because it does not contain a continuous and well arranged biography of a persona. Every incident narrated in this book is almost independent of each other. Yet every incident is like a flower in a garland created with the life-string of an auspicious and divine great saint.

I feel endless joy in my heart while offering this divine garland (Vaijayantimala) created with fragrant incidents that occurred in the life of the Paramhans Pujya Jogi Swami. Shree Hari also likes very much to wear a garland of flower - like

devotees around his neck. In the Ramanuj Vedant, pure soul has been narrated as a 'Kaustubhmani' (a heavenly gem) in the garland worn by Shree Hari. Jogi Swami is also like a 'Kaustubhmani' living in the heart of Shree Hari.

This book has been called a 'Gatha' instead of a volume. A eulogy sung with the reverent heart can be called as a 'Gatha'. Here is a eulogy of a beloved saint of Shree Hari.

As a mother having her heart full of affection, likes the praise of her child, Purn Purushottam Bhagawan Shree Hari also likes to hear the glory of his beloved saints more than His own glory.

I have not cared how the rationalists of today will evaluate this 'Gatha'.

I am a Sadhu of Bhagawan Swaminarayan. Unwavering faith is an important aspect in the life of a 'Sadhu', yet I have lived keeping the eyes of my intellect open. Instead of believing in the traditional things blindly, I have given more importance to science and philosophy. If one doesn't know how to live with one's eyes open in the sphere of religion, there are thousands of chances of going astray. If we live with our eyes open, we can identify the light and darkness prevailing in the sphere of religion.

As a result of giving importance to science and philosophy, my faith and love towards the creator of this beautiful world has become stronger by the passage of time. Whenever something great is invented in this 21st century, I feel that one more curtain covering my God is removed.

It is necessary for the mankind to live with the help of intellect. At the same time, if anyone tries to measure everything with the scale of intellect, he is the greatest ignorant.

The wise person must know and accept the limitations of his intellect.

The God has created such a wonderful world that it can't be evaluated only with the scale of intellect. One can't make out the mysteries of this divine world with the help of intellect. After being caught by frustration at a certain point of life, the great rationalists also become theists. The world is not only physical. Beyond the physical, there is a most subtle divine substance which cannot be seen with human eyes. That most subtle substance is invisible yet it is miraculously working in the entire cycle of happenings in this world. The whole world is full of His playful actions. As tide occurs in the sea sometimes, its divine aura becomes more evident at some places.

The influence of that divine element is pervading each and every atom everywhere but we require the eyes of Jogi Swami to see that influence. Due to the thick wall of our belief of being physical body only, we can't see or experience the light of that divine influence. The life of Paramhansas like Pujya Jogi Swami is like transparent glass and that divine light is ever spreading through such life.

With due awareness, I can say that the incidents in this 'Jivan Gatha' are certainly narrated with reverence but without being emotional or under illusion. Some incidents are narrated by Swamiji himself and some incidents happened before my eyes

which my intellect can't deny. Most of the incidents in this Gatha are narrated by the devotees who have themselves experienced the divinity of the Swami.

Due to the continuous devotion and worship of the Murti of the supreme God and source of all the incarnation Shree Hari, the divine capability is sprouted in Jogi Swami and Jogi Swami has never utilised it to get respect or wealth.

He believes his praise as his slander. As the rain showers on the hot earth, Swami has always showered his grace on the poor and afflicted people. In his life, he has never expected anything except to please Shree Hari. Because of this, our heart bears strong belief in these incidents full of divinity.

I must make here one most important clarification. The motive behind writing of this Gatha is not only to sing the glory of a great saint but to express my reverence towards Shree Hari who, while living in every atom of this world, invisibly affects the whole existence. Not only that, this Gatha has been written to create a strong thirst to attain Shree Hari, manifesting in the form of divine element.

With the devotion and worship of the supreme God Shree Hari, Jogi Swami has attained the high status of divinity and the same is the aim of our spiritual journey. The divinity of the life of Jogi Swami is like a light house for our lives. If we can not understand that aim and believe ourselves satisfied with writing or reading this Gatha, then our journey can be considered incomplete.

Pujya Jogi Swami has experienced the divine pleasure of the Murti of Shree Hari; we are to experience the same pleasure. Otherwise as if somebody who has visited the distant beautiful places, narrates about those places. We can hear the same but can't experience the joy of seeing those places. In the same way someone who has taken the best tasty food, when narrates it, we can hear only but we can't have the taste. Just like these examples, how one can get the true pleasure of Shree Hari by narrating or hearing about it? Therefore, the aim of writing this Gatha is to enable ourselves to attain the high state of divine experiences which Jogi Swami enjoys.

If the experiences narrated in this Gatha could create such a strong will in the hearts of the devout, the effort of writing this Gatha will be considered a success.

As such hundreds of divine experiences have occurred, in the life of Jogi Swami. While the writing of Gatha was in progress, various divine experiences come to our knowledge but due to shortage of space and over extension of the volume, we could not include them. The readers may forgive me for the same. The readers may please note that the incidents, included in this Gatha, are not arranged in chronological order.

On this occasion, I wish to remember with sincere thanks some saints who are serving and taking care of Pujya Jogi Swami with perseverance and enthusiasm. One of them is Vishnuprasaddasji, who has served Pujya Swami with total devotion and reverence for many years. Then I remember two other saints. One is Vishwaviharidasji and the other is

Shreevallabhdasji. These two saints have served Puja Swamiji with much care, love and reverence. I heartily pray, 'May Shree Hari shower His grace upon these saints who have served Puja Swamiji with faith and reverence'.

If Vishwaviharidasji Swami had not frequently reminded me, perhaps this Gatha could not have been completed. I express my special thanks to Vashram Bhagat for the narration of Puja Swami's foreign tour, because Vashram Bhagat was with us in that tour and he had written complete date wise diary containing full details of even small incidents. That diary has become quite helpful to me in narrating the foreign tour.

Shree Laxmanbhai Aadroja, who is the editor of Gurukul student union's magazine 'Sanskar Deep', is the inseparable part of Gurukul family. He has excellent command over Gujarati language. In most of the cassettes published by Gurukul, his commentary is there. He is a good author also. He has helped me a lot in editing the incidents narrated in this 'Jivan Gatha' and also in publication of it. Amidst his various activities, if he had not spared his time to extend his services in this task day and night, the publication of this 'Jivan Gatha' would have all become extremely difficult.

Shree Laxminarayandasji Swami, co-editor of 'Sadvidya', is providing his services in the publication department of Rajkot Swaminarayan Gurukul for many years. He is an author blessed by Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. He has given good guidance in the publication of this book. Under his guidance, the volunteers working in publication department of Gurukul have also extended their good co-operation in the process of publication.

To decorate front cover-page and to gather the photographs of various incidents of Puja Swami's life and to compile the same properly was really a very difficult and time consuming work, but Swami Vishwaviharidasji has completed this work diligently.

(My) Elder Guru-brother Shree Devkrishnadasji Swami and respected editor of 'Sadvidya' Shree Mahendrabhai Shelat have encouraged me and inspired me to complete this task.

Vrajeshkumar, son of Shree Rajabhai Lohana, has served for the publication of all the colour photographs in this 'Jivan Gatha'.

Jogi Swami's Guru Brother Gavaiya Swami Govindprakashdasji Swami has provided very old and important information regarding Jogi Swami. I am indebted to him for the same.

I request the readers to be generous over the errors that may have crept into the publication of this, 'Jivan Gatha'.

Many known and unknown donors have extended their help in the publication of this 'Jivan Gatha'. I wish that the compassionate Shree Hari would shower His blessings on all of them.

With Jay Swaminarayan,

Guru Poornima, 2060

02 July, 2004

- Swami Madhavpriyadas

Translator's Note

On a day in Oct. 2007, while I was travelling in a train from Veraval to Rajkot, at about 9-15 PM. my mobile phone rang. Param Puja Shastri Shree Madhavpriyadasji was speaking from Chharodi. He told me to translate 'Jogi Swami Ni Jeevngatha' into English. Though it was very difficult for me to spare time, I agreed.

It is a matter of great fortune for me, that I got this chance and it is nothing but sheer grace of Bhagawan Swaminarayan that I was chosen to do this pious work because it is near impossible to find a great Saint like Puja Jogi Swami in our time. With his rigorous penance, devotion and love towards Shree Hari, he has achieved oneness with Shree Hari. Amidst many difficulties and adverse circumstances it took one and a half year to complete this task, almost single handedly.

Though I have taken much care to make it with zero mistakes, it is possible that some mistakes may have crept in and I request the readers to condone the same.

Shree Pradipbhai Bhojani and N.H. Makwana have helped me in final proof reading. I hereby express my sincere thanks to them.

With Jay Swaminarayan,

- R. B. Ganatra (Rajkot)

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Bhadara : Land of Enlightened Souls

Kulam Pavitram Janani Krutartha

Vasundhara Bhagyavati cha tena

Vimukti Marge Sukhsindhu-magmam

Lagnam Pare Brahmani Yasya Chetah

On the way of salvation, whose mind is engrossed in the supreme God Shree Purushottam Narayan, who is an ocean of natural pleasure, that great devotee, the lineage becomes pious where he is born, his mother becomes fulfilled and the earth on which he treads becomes fortunate.

Gems can not be found in every mountain

One can not find pearls in the head of every elephant

Every forest does not have sandal trees. In the same way, great ascetics do not take birth at every place. The land and the mother are rare who give birth to such great saints.

Such a fortunate land is Bhadara. Bhadara is a treasure of enlightened souls.

In Samvat year 1860, Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan had arrived in the village Bhadara. At that time, on seeing the village, Shree Hari had said, 'There are several free souls (Muktas) in this village (Hari Charitra Chintamani Part -3 Vol. - 402)

As many as 16 'Muktas' (free souls) have taken birth in this small village. Out of them, Murji and Sunderji, two were born in Brahmin family.

Murji means that incarnate Aksharbrahm Sadguru Gunatitanand Swami and Sunderji means Shivanand Swami.

Four 'Muktas' have taken birth in the peasant family (farmer community), (1) Dosabhai (2) Devabhai and Ratnabhai (both had achieved transcendental meditation) (4) Ram

Bhanderi, graced by Bhagawan Shree Hari. Ratnabhai had become an ascetic and was named as Vignandasji. Later on Ram Bhanderi settled in village Chadiya near Amreli.

As many as ten 'Muktas' had taken birth in the carpenter family of this village: Vasta Sutar, Ramji Sutar, Raja Sutar and Rudibai, who was the sister of Lalji Sutar of Shekhpatt. Rudibai had four sons (1) Vashram Sutar, who had given salvation to ants with a wish only, (2) Mavji Sutar (3) Ranchhod Sutar and (4) Naran Sutar. Rudibai had two daughters also who were like incarnate of great saints, Harbai and Ladubai. Both were having divine vision. Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan had visited this village so many times and made this land holy.

The river Und is surrounded by beautiful bushes and Shree Hari has shown his divine actions in the pious water of the same, taken bath with the saints and surfed in the river by using a sheet spread over the water, as a raft. He had made so many to experience the trance, has taken severe test of the saints by giving them extremely difficult vows, as a Goldsmith purifies Gold by smelting it.

In such a pious land a great ascetic took birth on the second day of first half of Vaishakh month of S.Y. 1961 date 06-05-1905. We know him as Jogi Swami. His original name is Swami Hariprakashdasji but very few people know him by this name. It is very difficult to know the day of birth of Jogi Swami. On the investigation by Vishwavahari Swami, it came to know from the history book of Barot (person who keeps the record of family events and generations) of Bhanderi Family that the birth of Jogi Swami was on 2nd day of vaishakh Sud, Vikram Samvatsar 2061. Counting on this base, according to English calendar birth date of Jogi Swami can be 6th May, 1905,

Saturday. (Note : Barot of Bhanderi Family is Atulbhai Boghabhai Barot - village Parvala)

His earlier name was Devji. The name of his mother was Gangaben and Father's name was Kalabhai. Swami had two brothers and three sisters. The names of his brothers were Keshabhai and Savjibhai. The names of his sisters were Premiben, Maniben and Ramuben. Devji was the eldest of all. Devji was really winner of the minds of Deities. In a simple and straight forward peasant family, an accomplished ascetic has taken birth. It is more true that for the salvation of thousands of people, Shreeji Maharaj has sent him on the earth.

Devji's life was full of divine experiences from the very childhood. Due to his divine vision he was able to see the Deities.

Descending of Deities

The temples and the Deities are the heart of Indian culture. The religious scriptures talk about great importance of Darshan of Deities. Particularly, the 'Darshan' of Aarti in the morning and evening is of prime importance.

In the earlier days, the glory of Aarti was immense. In the evening, the cattle would be returning to the village and the whole atmosphere would be covered in the dust of the dusk, with the blowing of gentle winds in the jungle, as if several flutes were sounding, the people would be returning home after toiling for the whole day in the farms and fields.

The birds would be entering in their nests on the shady trees, as if chirping of birds were a musical prayer in the evening.

After the setting of the sun, the creator of the world sprinkles wonderful and brilliant stars in the sky to light and to

beautify the world at night. Just like reflections of those stars on the earth, the people light up the lamps.

At such a fine time, as if the creator of the world calls, conch sounds in the temple, bells and drums also sound; singing of Aarti starts. People come to the temple to have the benefit of Aarti.

Apart from the people, as the scriptures say, the Deities from the sky also come to have the 'Darshan of Aarti', but who can see those Deities? Very few. Amongst them one is Jogi Swami.

Shree Jogi Swami is a simple, straight forward and frank saint ever engrossed in and faithful to the Bhagawan. His life is sacred. Sometimes when Jogi Swami would be in great delight, he would speak about his divine experiences.

When he was in his childhood, at the age of five, his mother used to take him to the temple in the evening and make him stand in the verandah of the temple.

Further story, let us see in the words of Jogi Swami himself: "I was a small child and the temple was at a height. As I was unable to go upstairs, I used to stand near the grill before the Murti of Shree Hanumanji. Sometimes someone would take me upstairs and sometimes I used to have Darshan of Aarti down-stairs. At that time I could see a wonderful miracle. The Deities from the sky would come down to have the 'Darshan' at the time of Aarti. Their bodies were tall and bright, wearing royal dresses. Some-times one and some-times more would be coming, directly landing on the temple without any sound. Then they would come down and would stand till the Aarti was over. After the Aarti was over, they used to fly away in the sky like birds.

It was surprising for me. As at the time of Aarti, the people were coming upstairs in the temple and these people would be coming from the sky? How was that?

In my childhood, I could see all these but I was unable to understand it. Later on, I could come to know about the importance of Aarti. Deities are also coming to have the Darshan of Aarti. It is difficult to believe that Deities also would come to have the Darshan of Aarti. Therefore, Shreeji Maharaj, to reconcile my doubt, showed me the Deities.

Turning Point of Life

There is a story in the 'Purans'. Devarshi Narad was a child. His age was five years only. At that tender age he got the company of saints. The saints were glad to see the concentration of mind of Naradji in Satsang. The saints gave him the '*Prasad*'. On acceptance of the same, the heart of Naradji became delighted. The right understanding about true and false sprouted in him and he became an ascetic forsaking the worldly pleasures and bondage.

Same thing happened in the life of Devji. The temple was near his house. Mother Gangaba was frequently taking young Devji to the temple. Sometimes the saints would come in the temple. Devji was experiencing great joy in his heart to see the saints.

Now I narrate the occasion in the words of Swamiji: "Once the saints had come to the temple. The saints were unique, not like today's saints. If we sit near these saints, we could experience great joy in our heart. I liked the saints most. I did not like to be away from them. Sometimes the saints would give me '*Prasad*' of crystals of sugar or '*Patasa*' (one kind of

sweet made of sugar.) I used to sit in the temple before the saints, thinking, "How good these saints are! If my mother permits me, I may go with these saints and become a saint myself."

The life of Devji was introvert from the childhood. He did not like chit-chatting with anybody. He did not like playing also. Sometimes, he used to make 'Shivling' out of earth at the bank of river Und. He also used to worship with the materials available to him and was used to move Mala. These were his favourite games.

Going to the temple for Darshan of the God and to do the work allotted by the parents was his routine.

His outward appearance was simple and frank but his heart was full of devotion. Gradually, he grew up and was looking after farm-activities. As Gunatitanand Swami, an incarnation of 'Aksharbrahm' in the name of 'Mulji', used to water his field, Devji was also working in the field. Sometimes he was working as assistant with other farmers also.

Devji attained youth but remained totally unconcerned and indifferent towards the worldly affairs.

The parents were desirous to get him married but Devji was not at all willing to do so. However, he could not resist the decision of his parents and he had to marry. With the passage of time he had a daughter also who was named Uji.

The mind of Devji could not stick to the worldly affairs. The love of wife and children could not bind him as he was a different kind of man.

The position of Devji was also like a lion forcibly locked in a cage. His heart was full of detachment. He was living in the family without any feeling of attachment and his mind was restless.

Victory over Maya...

Though Devji lived in the family, he was totally unattached like lotus in water and boundless like the sky. The attraction of wealth and women could not entice him.

Once Devji Bhagat had some work to be done by a shepherd. He went to the house of the shepherd. It was early morning. Still the world was covered in darkness. The atmosphere was desolate. The movement of people had not started yet. Devji Bhagat knocked the door of the shepherd. Incidentally, the shepherd was not home. From inside the house, the wife of the shepherd asked, "who is there?" Devji Bhagat replied, "I am Devji". The wife of that shepherd opened the door and she saw Devji Bhagat. It was loneliness in darkness. The shepherd was not home. On seeing young Devji, the wife of the shepherd was erotically attracted towards him. As Devji Bhagat entered into the house, the wife of that shepherd closed the door from inside and started showing erotic attitude and movement. Devji Bhagat became alert. He remembered the God, opened the door quickly and rushed out.

In loneliness if one gets company of a woman and yet his mind is not enticed, such devotees are rare and Shree Hari Himself has praised such devotees in the 'Vachanamrut'. Devji was such an unshakable devotee.

In an ancient 'Bhajan' Panbai has said, 'Meru to dage pan jena man na dage, Mar ne Bhangi pade brahmand re'.

The mountain can be shaken but mind of a true devotee remains unmoved even though the whole universe might crumble.

The 'Maya' can not entice a great man full of detachment. Now he had to proceed on the path of the God. It is said that

when one proceeds on the path towards God, Maya creates obstacles in many ways. Only he, who is not enticed by the attraction of Maya, can attain God.

In the Purans, there are several incidents of 'Sadhaks' (seekers) as to when one starts penance or journey on the path towards the God, the Deities might resort to various tricks to create hindrances by sending enticing means, wealth and beautiful women to break his vows. In such a test of gods, several great saints have failed to accomplish their penance.

The saints like 'Shuk' and Sanaka etc and God Narayan Himself can not get enticed in the illusions created by the Gods, otherwise the attraction of wealth and women is so great that great accomplished people may also lose their way.

But there are several great saints of Bhagawan Swaminarayan who were not fascinated by the enchantment of wealth and woman. Shree Tulsidasji has considered such saints at par with the God.

"Nari Nayan-shar Jehi Nahi laga,

Krodh Tam Nishi Mahi Je Nar Jaga Il

Lobh Moh Fansi gal Na Bandhaya

So Nar Tum Saman Raghuraya Il

Bhagwan Ved Vyas also bows down to such saints.

"Kanak-Kanta Sutren Veshthitam Sakalam Jagat

Tesu Tasu Virakto Sah Dwibhujo Parmeshwara"

The entire world is bound by the string of wealth and woman and one who remains detached towards both, is a God with two hands.

Jogi Swami has remained away from wealth and woman throughout his life. Swami has never touched money, not even identified money. He never kept money himself nor has made others to keep for him. He has never asked for money from anybody even for the good deeds. Nowhere such saint can be found who can not recognise money.

So many times Swami says, 'We do not require worldly things. We do not want anything from the world. We are to delight our Shreeji Maharaj only.

We bow down to such saints who are not enticed by women and wealth.

Ewa Jo Malyare Amane Jogiya

Lagya Nahi Nari Nayan Na Ban

Dhan re Dolat ma Nav Doliya

Samarath sadhu chatur sujan

Forsaking of Home

Devji's mind had become indifferent towards the worldly affairs. How can an elephant remains tied by a lotus creeper? At last, Devji left home leaving behind the bondage of the worldly things. As a horse shakes off wrong fur of the body, he had forsaken the home. As Nishkulanand Swami had become saint in older age, Devji also left home to become a saint in his ripe age. When he left home, his age was around forty-nine years.

Got the Guide...

Devji Bhagat left home, but he had no idea about where to go and what to do. He could only remember the God and go where the God may lead.

For the person, who heartily walks on the path of God, the God surely manages a guide for him.

With the inspiration of God, Devji Bhagat came to Gondal where he met a true preceptor. Gondal is a place where great saints live. In Nani Bazar area, there is a temple of the original Swaminarayan Sampraday.

Akshar Murti Gunatitanand Swami, great saint Balmukunddasji etc have lived there for a long periods. Gunatitanand Swami had left his body there, at his own independent will. Several great house holder devotees have also been born here.

Bhagawan Shree Hari Himself has sanctified this land with His lotus feet.

The great amongst the greatest rulers in entire India, Darbar Bhagwatsinhji has built up a big temple here. In such a holy place a great saint namely Mahant Swami was living. Mahant Swami was one of the best saints of 'Gunatit tradition'. He always remained engrossed in the Murti of Shreeji Maharaj. He was a word-accomplished saint. He was also an elder Guru Brother of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj.

After forsaking home to become a saint, Devji Bhagat came to Gondal temple in Nani Bazar. After doing 'Darshan', he sat on the stairs of the temple. In the meanwhile, Mahant Swami saw him. Mahant Swami carefully observed the face of Devji Bhagat and he recognised the great soul living within him.

On seeing the Swami, Devji Bhagat also felt as if each other knew for many births. Mahant Swami asked, "Bhagat, from where are you coming?" Devji Bhagat replied, "Bhadara". On hearing the name of Bhadara Mahant Swami became glad and said, "Bhadara? oh! it is a village of Akshar Murti Gunatitanand Swami! Bhagat, for what purpose have you come here, leaving Bhadara?" Bhagat Replied, "Till the date, I have toiled for the householders and now I have come out to serve the saints and the Bhagawan." Mahant Swami became very glad to hear the words coming out from the inner heart of this new devotee (seeker) and asked, "Then, will you stay here to serve?"

For Devji Bhagat it was the desired thing. Bhagat gladly said, "If you wish, I can stay." Devji Bhagat's reply was full of dedication." Swami said, "OK, you may stay here. "Then Mahant Swami made him to wear dress of a 'Parshad' and let him live there to serve. Thus, great saint Mahant Swami took him under his shelter.

Devji Bhagat had good aptitude of the service. The construction work of a 'Seat' (*Bethak*) in Kailash Bag was going on. Bhagat was serving there. Moreover, he was also serving in 'Gaushala' (cowshed), to take care of cows and to clean the place. Though Mahant Swami was an elder saint, he was also serving in cowshed with Devji Bhagat.

Service is a Great Devotion...

The scriptures have considered service as a great and had to understand devotion. At first sight, one can not see any difference between work and service but if one goes deep, he can see the vast difference between the two.

If one works for one's own interest, it is work but work done for others is service. Work done for friends and relatives is work but if it is done for saints and Satsangis it is service. Work done for own body is work but the same thing done for the God is service. However, to understand the devotion in form of service (SEVA) is very difficult.

The work may be good, may be religious one, may be of Jap and penance, but if done according to one's own wish, then it is work and the same thing if done according to the will of Shree Hari and great saints then it is service. Work done for self creates bondage but service can earn salvation. Service done with the remembrance of Shree Hari is far better. Service and remembrance of God is an ornament of a saint.

In our great country, Bharat the great saints have performed the smallest and petty service to please the God.

The saints full of saintliness of the highest order would be performing service of cleaning the cowsheds.

The true saints keep the brilliance of their souls covered under the sheet of their service and simplicity. It is difficult to recognise the gem hidden in the ashes. In the same way, it is difficult to recognise the simple and straight forward-looking great Saint's true height. Therefore, most of the people can not recognise the great personalities. The eyes of the people behold outward grandeur. Their eyes remain impressed with outward pomp and glory. Such eyes can not recognise true saints. Ishavashya Upanishad truly says, 'Hiranyamayen Patren Satysyapihitam Mukham', meaning the mouth of truth is covered with the vessel of gold.

High rank of Mandaleshwars and Maha Mandaleshwars, crowds of disciples, show of costly cars, grand seats of religious

places, wealth of Monasteries, temples and 'Ashrams', big processions in Golden palanquins, these are all vessels of gold.

The truth is away from all these. The truth does not require any outward ornaments. Truth can be found under the sheet of simplicity, not in the show of pomp and glory. However, mostly the eyes of the people look at great personalities in such grandeur and at last, they are deceived.

Very few discreet people can pierce these golden covers and can recognise a true saint. The great saints full of wealth of true saintliness always hide themselves under some cover. On the other hand the hypocrites, empty like drum inside, leave no stone unturned to proclaim their pomp loudly.

Mahant Swami was simple and straightforward and Devji Bhagat was also simple like Jad-Bharat. Both were true companions in letter and spirit.

From outward appearance, none could recognise these two 'Paramhansas' who had attained the Parmatma, under cover of their shining-less cover.

Divine Dances ..

Sometimes the other saints and Parshads serving in the temple would placate Devji Bhagat, sometime they would jest and ask, "Bhagat, do you know how to sing Kirtans?"

Bhagat would innocently reply, "Yes, I can sing the Bhajans of Mirabai."

The other saints, placating Devji Bhagat would say, "Bhagat, sing whatever you know." Devji Bhagat would gladly sing the Bhajans by Mirabai.

As a drunkard dances in intoxication, Devji Bhagat would attain great joy, while singing Bhajan of Mirabai. He would stand up taking *Kartal* in his hands and dance like Narsinh Mehta.

The viewers would be happy, someone would jest but Devji Bhagat would not care. No impact on him. He would be engrossed in great joy of Bhajan.

Mavji Bhagat was in Gondal. He was blessed by Mahant Swami. Mavji Bhagat had pleased Pujya Balmukunddasji Swami. He had memorised several '*Kirtans*' of Nand saints. Mahant Swami advised Mavji Bhagat to teach the Kirtans of Nand saints to this new Parshad Devji Bhagat. Mavji Bhagat, at the order of Mahant Swami, started teaching kirtans to Devji Bhagat. Devji Bhagat was illiterate, therefore he did not know how to read or write. Mahant Swami told him to learn reading and writing.

At the order of Mahant Swami, Devji Bhagat slowly learned to read Shikshapatri. He started memorising kirtans also with confidence.

Devji Bhagat's voice was sweet. Moreover, he sang kirtans remembering Shreeji Maharaj, therefore his words touched the hearts of listeners. Thus, Devji Bhagat and Mavji Bhagat became good friends.

Devji Bhagat had much liking for renunciation and detachment, therefore he memorised mostly the kirtans of that kind. Devji Bhagat had no love or choice for clothes, meals or beds. He had only love at the lotus feet of Shree Hari.

Simple dress, simple meals and simple bed on the earth. His nature was to render petty services. In this way some years passed.

As the birds incubate eggs under their wings, as the fish incubate eggs with sight, as 'Kunj' bird incubates eggs with its tendency, Mahant Swami, sometimes with his presence, sometimes with his sight and sometimes with tendency, took care for development of this new devout.

As after incubation, the baby birds find new wings, the inner sight of Devji Bhagat opened and he got the wings of *Agnya* and *Upasana* (spiritual commands and devotion).

Then Mahant Swami thought that now it is a time to give initiation to this new devout. There was some opposition from the family members but at last the relatives also knew that now this fellow is of no use for them and therefore, their objections also ended. Mahant Swami was now waiting for a good occasion to give initiation to Devji Bhagat.

Initiation ..

Vikram Samvat year of 2001 arrived. Junagadh is a place of pilgrimage and also a house of ascetics. A divine festival was arranged there by Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj.

In the samvat year of 1990 Shastriji Maharaj, standing in the pious water of Narmada River, took some decisions.

"In human body there are three and a half crore (35 millions) small hairs, therefore I am to chant three and a half crore Mahamantras, of Swaminarayan. Chanting would be kept secret, and meanwhile I shall not become angry. When this vow is completed, I will arrange a great festival for the extension of 'Satsang'. Nobody would be inspired for becoming host of this festival. If with the inspiration of God any host comes forward then only this festival would be celebrated.

This 'Anushtan' (vow) of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj continued for nearly ten years and the number of 'Jap' crossed the figure of ten crores (one billion) instead of three and a half crores.

At the will of Shree Hari, he was appointed as Mahant of Junagadh Swaminarayan temple. Thus, Shree Hari created the base to fulfill the vow of celebration of a big festival by Shastriji Maharaj. Shree Hari arranged for the host also. Gandhi Brothers of Mumbai became the host.

It was the difficult time of World War II, yet Shree Hari created favourable situations for the celebration of a big festival. Thousands of saints and lacs of 'Haribhaktas' attended this festival. The streets of Junagadh were flooded with human beings. The ruler 'Nawab' of Junagadh provided all the facilities for this great festival. Acharya Shree Anandprasadji Maharaj also came to attend this festival. A grand procession was taken out in the city of Junagadh. Everywhere there were cries of victory for Shree Swaminarayan.

Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan Himself gave Darshan to the head of Khijada Mandir during this festival and advised him to go to the Swaminarayan temple and to convey to Shastriji Maharaj that the Bhagawan is glad with the festival. Swami was worrying about the exhausting stock of goods but the Bhagawan will not let it exhaust. Also, tell Swamiji to ensure that good persons are deployed in the kitchen to take care. Tell Swami that this is just a beginning and as in Lanka, the tail of Shree Hanumanji got elongated good activities would be continued to be done at the hands of Swami, "saying this Shree Hari disappeared.

During His incarnation, Bhagawan Swaminarayan had arranged so many festivals. After Shree Hari left for his abode

in Akshardham, perhaps such type of big festival was never celebrated in the history of satsang society.

During this historical festival, Mahant Swami thought: 'It is a good occasion to give Bhagawati initiation to this new devout Devji Bhagat'. Mahant Swami told his disciple Gavaia Swami Govindprasaddasji, "We want to initiate this devout as a saint."

Gavaia Swami said, "Swami, he has no skill to do anything. He has become aged also. At this age, how will he be able to learn the do's - don'ts for a saint? He is just like an innocent person.' Mahant Swami said, "Slowly he will learn. Moreover you will get a companion." Gavaia Swami then agreed. Mahant Swami then conveyed this to Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, the arranger of this festival and his younger Guru Brother that "As Acharya Maharaj has arrived, we want that this Devji Bhagat be initiated as a saint.' Shastriji Maharaj became very glad to hear this because he also knew virtues of Devji Bhagat. During this festival, 'Dixa Mahotsav' was celebrated and Acharya Shree Anandprasadji Maharaj gave initiation to Devji Bhagat on 8th day of second half of Falgun month of S.Y. 2001 Wednesday Dt.7-3-1945 morning and gave him the name 'Sadhu Hariprakashdasji.'

Holy Bath

Jogi Swami was a newly initiated saint. This Jogi (an ascetic) by birth got Mahant Swami as preceptor who was also a Jogi by birth and was well known as Mahant Swami in the Satsang. His life was very pious and desire-less. With the blessings of Mahant Swami, Shree Hari has made true, the volitions of thousands of Haribhaktas (devotees). By

appearance, he was very simple and straightforward but his saintliness was sky high. He always remained engrossed in the Murti of Shree Hari, and by the grace of Shree Hari, he became such a favorite of the God that his word was an order for destiny.

Once Mahant Swami thought to celebrate the festival of Jal-Zilani Ekadashi in Gadhapur. He took Jogi Swami as companion and arrived at Gadhapur. At that time a pious saint, namely Purani Trikamcharandasji was the head of the temple. He heartily welcomed both these Jogis.

Swami did the 'Darshan' of Gopinathji Maharaj. He also did 'Darshan' of courtyard of Dadakhachar, Akshar Ordi, Laxmiwadi etc. holy memorials. Mahant Swami wanted to have bath in Narayan-Dharo (a pious and memorial place in River Ghelo)

Village Mandawdhar is situated on the bank of river Ghelo near Gadhada. Bhagawan Swaminarayan had visited this village many times. In the outskirts of the village, there is a place namely Narayandharo (a pit in the river Ghelo). At this place Shree Hari had taken bath several times. At that time 'River Ghelo' was not dry as it is today. Almost for the entire year, the water was flowing.

Mahant Swami wanted to take bath in 'Narayan Dharo,' therefore, along with Jogi Swami, he arrived at that place. It was a rainy season. The clouds had gathered in the sky. Sometimes it was raining in gentle shower. Greenery had covered the earth and gentle cold wind was blowing. The peacocks were dancing with joy. In such a fine situation, these two 'Jogis', taking *Mala* in their hands, walked towards the River and the bushes. The whole atmosphere was dancing with joy at the 'Darshan' of these two pious saints.

With sweet voice, the water was flowing in the River Ghelo. 'Narayan Dharo' was full of water. Both these 'Paramhansas' put their bags of clothes on the bank of the river and prepared for the Bath. Both these saints had no idea how deep the water was. Jogi Swami said to Mahant Swami, "Swami, you may please sit on the bank. I may go into the water to examine how much deep the water is." 'Mahant Swami, as if testing this new disciple, said, 'Don't go, what would happen if it is too deep?"

Jogi Swami said, 'Swami, with your grace I do not fear deep water, therefore please let me go.'

Mahant Swami smiled to see fearlessness of his new disciple. Both the saints knew how to swim and make others swim in the endless waters of this material world, then how could they be deterred by deep water ?

With a silent hint of eyes, Mahant Swami allowed this new disciple to go into the water. Jogi Swami went into the water of 'Narayan Dharo'. There was a great happiness in his heart for having a chance of taking bath in the pious water of Narayan Dharo with his preceptor. Jogi Swami moved in the water in all the directions, examined as to how deep the water was. The water was upto the chest level. There was clean sand at the bottom. There was no mud at all. Jogi Swami said to Mahant Swami, "Swami, the water is not deep. There is no mud at the bottom also. Please come into the water."

Slowly Mahant Swami entered the water of Narayan Dharo, remembering Shreeji Maharaj, and started taking Bath. Jogi Swami started pouring water on the body of Mahant Swami. Mahant Swami's heart filled with joy and love towards this new disciple. He also started pouring water on Jogi Swami with both hands. While pouring water, Mahant Swami was

saying as, "Now your sins are gone, now your sins are gone". With every word of Mahant Swami, divine spirit lighted up in the heart of Jogi Swami. The divinity sprouted like shining diamond in the heart of Jogi Swami. That was a unique and divine bath of initiation as a saint. The Deities in the sky, the Deities of bushes and accomplished persons were gladly seeing this great bath. As if the rain also associated in the bath, it was raining slowly its love on both these born Jogis.

A true Jogi

Swami became a saint. His nature was innocent like a child. In the Shikshapatri, Shree Hari has said, "Our saints shall live like 'Jad-Bharat'". Swami's likings and living were also like Jad-Bharat. No ego or love for the body at all. No worry for the meal, for the bedding, for good clothes and things. He was satisfied with what he received at the will of Shree Hari. If good things were received at the will of others he would reject them.

Whenever some Haribhaktas (devotees) would arrange a meal (RASOI) in Gondal temple, several food items would be prepared. All the saints would take the meal but Jogi Swami would not go. When all the saints would complete their meal, Jogi Swami used to go in the kitchen, would prepare a Rotlo of millet and would take it as only the food.

If someone said, 'Swami, today there was a good meal (RASOI), why didn't you come?' In reply, the Swami said, "They all have come after doing penance, so they could afford. I am yet to do much penance so I can not afford such good meals.'

Bhajan and penance had become integral part of his life. On seeing such a penance-full and desire-less life of Jogi Swami, Mahant Swami said, 'This is a Jogi in real sense'. When he was

initiated as a saint, he was given a name Hariprakashdasji but with a great love towards him, Mahant Swami (his preceptor) had given him the name of 'Jogi'. Since then all know him as 'Jogi Swami.'

Swami's nature is full of penance. He has maintained the vow of taking meal only once in a day. Moreover on the day of Ekadashi (11th day of first and second half of every month) he used to observe fast without taking food and water. On Vaman Jayanti, he observed two days fast consecutively. On Hari Jayanti (9th day of first half of every month) Purnima (full moon day) and Amavasya (Last day of every month) he observed fast without taking even water. Every now and then he observed 'Dharna-Parna' (observing fast on alternate days).

During *Dharna-Parna* vow, he was observing fast on alternate day without taking even water. On the day of breaking the fast, he took meal only once in a day. Once Jogi Swami had observed 'Dharna-Parna' vow for the whole year. For so many years, he took *Hotch-potch* and 'Rotlo' only. When Shastriji Maharaj arranged first 'special Yatra train', Jogi Swami was also with him. During this pilgrimage of two months, Jogi Swami was taking groundnuts and Gur (jaggery) only. No choice in food, no spices, no sugar at all. He has never touched pickles or *Papad*. Swami's meal means very simple without any good taste.

He sleeps on the floor without any bedding. He spreads only a sheet and sleeps on it, not using mosquito net.

Someone would say, "Swami! It will be good if you sleep on bedding. Swami would say, "It is not good to pamper this body. It is good to exert it. Why should I waste my time in spreading and folding the bedding? I instead, the time should be used to do Bhajan."

In Shikshapatri, Shree Hari has prohibited saints to sleep during the day. However, today, most of the saints are doing service, hence all are habituated to sleep in the afternoon.

In 'Dharmamrut' (a scripture), Shreeji Maharaj has allowed the saints engaged in service activities to sleep in the afternoon and the advantage of this permission is used in abundance today. However, Jogi Swami is different. He never sleeps in the afternoon. In that period, when others would take rest, Jogi Swami, taking Mala in his hand, walks in 'Sadhu Ashram' and moves Mala.

At night also, Jogi Swami used to walk in rear verandah moving Mala until late night. He sleeps for some time only at night. After waking up, again he sits to move Mala. Sometimes he moves Mala for the whole night. In the morning, he directly goes for bath and then sits in the 'Pooja'.

Swami starts his Pooja in the early morning and continues it upto noon when meal (*Thal*) is served to the God. Moreover, on Ekadashi, Hari Jayanti and on full moon days, Swami continuously moves Mala and observes fast without taking even water sitting on one 'Asan' only.

The Murti of the Bhagawan in Swami's Pooja was previously in the temple at village Timbi. Years ago, Shree Gordhanbhai Parshottambhai Mehta was performing 'Pooja' of this Murti. After Gordhanbhai's 'Akshar Vas' (Death) the devotees placed this Murti in the temple and the worshipper of the temple was performing the Pooja of this Murti.

In the meanwhile, *Murti Pratishtha* ceremony was arranged in the temple of village Fatsar, which was renovated by Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. Jogi Swami was also arrived in Fatsar on that occasion. After conclusion of that festival, Swami

came to Timbi. In Timbi Jogi Swami saw that the worshipper was performing Pooja of Murti of Shree Hari Krushna Maharaj, but it was not being done properly. Therefore, Jogi Swami said to the devotees, "If you permit, I want to take this Murti with me. I will serve Him."

The Hari Bhaktas gladly agreed to it. Therefore, Jogi Swami brought that Murti with him to Rajkot. Since then Jogi Swami performs 'Pooja' of that Murti with devotion and affection.

Swami has frequently visited many villages for the spread of 'Satsang', mostly moving on foot. No by bus or train. Sometimes, if any one's cart or tractor was available, he would sit on that vehicle. He has trained his body, as Gunatitanand Swami had trained his body in such a way that even thorns can't injure his feet.

Jogi Swami has performed pilgrimage of Vadtal etc. holy places on foot many a times. During such pilgrimage wherever Jogi Swami arrives, the atmosphere at that place would be filled with devotion. Swami has arranged Dhoon (continuously chanting the Mahamantra of Shree Swaminarayan) of twelve hours or 24 hours. During such continuous 'Dhoon', other persons would change one by one but Swami would sit in the 'Dhoon' continuously without any break and without taking food.

Jogi Swami has created new temples in several villages and renovated many others.

'Aeva Sant Chhe Saga Sahuna re,
Sukhdayak Jan Bahuna re,
Jevi Ae Sant Kare Chhe Sahayre,
Tevi Koi thaki kem thay re'.

Meaning : Such a saint is a relative of all and he gives happiness to many people. He helps in such a way as no other can.

Jogi Will Not Come ..

In S.Y. 2002, Mahant Swami was transferred from Gondal to Rib. Thus, he got his turn to move in Rib area. Mahant Swami arrived at Rib. Gavaiya Swami, Jogi Swami and two Parshads were with him. Mahant Swami stayed in Rib for fifteen days.

The loving devotees of Rib were craving to worship the saints and to give them new clothes. They conveyed their wish to Mahant Swami.

On such occasion, the saints generally would be glad but Mahant Swami was a desire-less saint, hence he said, 'No, We do not want any *Dhotiya*. We have sufficient with us then why to accept more?' However, the devotees insisted much and therefore Mahant Swami had to agree. Haribhakt devotees brought good quality 'Dhotiyas' from Rajkot and prepared for the 'Poojan' of saints.

As Mahant Swami was desireless, so was Jogi Swami, true Jogi by nature. He knew the likings of Mahant Swami perfectly and he also knew that this 'Poojan' of saints with 'Dhotiyas' is being done against his will. Therefore, before Haribhaktas started Pooja, Jogi Swami sneaked away into upper level cellar of the temple and started moving Mala.

At the time of performing Poojan of Saints, the devotees did not see Jogi Swami, hence they started search for him but he could not be found. They asked Mahant Swami, 'Where is Jogi Swami?'

Mahant Swami knew the liking of his disciple very well. Hence, with a smile he said, "As some one, with a fear of

gunpoint, would run away, seeing your *Rajoguni* Dhotiya he has run away somewhere. He will not come to accept your Dhotiya". Thus, Jogi Swami had no liking for good things from the begining. He has never hoarded anything and has not let others do so. He has thoroughly maintained the vow of non-hoarding, given by Shreeji Maharaj. For such a saint, Shree Hari has said,

"Sant Manjo Mari Murti re, Aema fer Nathi ek ratti re

Antarjamipane rahu Aemare, Mate Nathi bandhata a kema re

Meaning: You shall believe such a saint as my own Murti. There is no difference at all. I reside in him as the knower; therefore, nothing can bind him.

Wandering Village to Village ..

In S.Y. 2003 and 2004 Jogi Swami, along with Mahant Swami, moved in the Rib area and gave much happiness to the Hari Bhaktas and with Dhun Bhajan he nourished Satsang.

During S.Y. 2005-06 he toured Mengani area and made satsang stronger. As such, during those years, mostly Gavaiya Swami and Jogi Swami were touring the villages and Mahant Swami stayed mostly in Rajkot Gurukul with his younger Guru Brother Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj Shree Dharmajivandasji Swami. There was unique friendship and oneness between Mahant Swami and Shastriji Maharaj.

After the 'Aksharwas' of Gurudev Purani Swami Shree Gopinathdasji, Shastriji Maharaj was observed complete respect of his elder Guru Brothers and was doing as they pleased. Shastriji Maharaj had great regard for Mahant Swami and Mahant Swami also had much love for Shstrijji Maharaj. As the

erudition and saintliness of Shastriji Maharaj was just like Gurudev Purani Gopinathdasji, Mahant Swami remained respectful toward him.

Cure of sore Eyes

Aeva Re malya re Amne Jogiya

Hari Joya Pragat Pramaan

Sadaaye Raheve Re Sanmukhma

Jogi Aeto Param Sujaan.

Meaning: We have such a saint, who has seen Shree Hari in presence, Shree Hari always remains before him. Such a saint is true knower.

In Rajkot Gurukul, there is a building behind Sadhu Ashram (Saints Residence), its verandah was known as “*Danavali Osari*”. Once Jogi Swami was sitting in that verandah. In the meantime, he had a jerk in the eyes and he started experiencing severe pain. The pain was unbearable. Jogi Swami feared if he would lose the sight. At that time suddenly like a flash Mahant Swami arrived there and said, “O saint! Are you experiencing very much pain in the eyes?”

Jogi Swami said, “Yes Swami, much pain! Unbearable pain’.

Mahant Swami placed his hand on Jogi Swami with compassion and miracle happened. All the pain was gone. The eyes became quite normal. Jogi Swami got endless peace.

With compassion, Mahant Swami gave Jogi Swami new eyes, different from that of us, with divine sight. With that

eyesight, Jogi Swami has seen Shree Hari in physical form several times.

When Sadguru becomes kind, he gives divine sight with which one can easily see the God. In Bhagvat Geeta, Bhagawan Shree Krishna says to Arjun, ‘O Parth! With these eyes, you are unable to see my original form; therefore, I am giving you a divine sight. With those eyes you can see my original form’. Thus with the eyes given by Bhagawan Shree Krishna, Arjuna could see the omnipresent form of the God.

With the eyesight given by a true great saint of the Supreme Bhagawan, Jogi Swami could see, cause of the causes Purushottam Narayan.

Unforgettable Pious Incidents

[Note: Mahant Swami was a great saint, always engrossed in Shree Hari and was word-accomplished. Whatever divine power, one can see in Jogi Swami is a result of the grace of Mahant Swami. The earth is a worthy place with such great ‘Paramhansas’. These straightforward and simple saints have sanctified this world and have conneted thousands of people to Shree Hari.]

The life of Mahant Swami was full of several divine incidents. His ‘Aksharvas’ and some incidents before that, are greatly divine. Every now and then Jogi Swami would tell those incidents. I have described those incidents here as heard from Shree Jogi Swami.

After writing those incidents, I have read out the same before Jogi Swami. Whatever difference was pointed out by him, is corrected according to his oral advice. In between some

incidents and except some background, I have tried to write mostly in the words of Shree Jogi Swami.

Transfer from Rajkot

As per the established practice and convention of Junagadh Region, in every 'Jyeshtha' month, the transfers of saints were being carried out. In Jyeshtha month of S.Y. 2006, Mahant Swami got his turn to move to Rajkot area. In the temples of Swaminarayan Sampraday, the transfers of saints are being carried out at a stipulated period. The aim was to maintain the unhoarding vow of saints and to avoid the development of any attachment in saints even towards the places like temple. However, with the passage of time this aim does not seem to have been maintained. Due to the politics spread into the 'Satsang,' several undescribable vices have entered into the system. However, let us leave it aside.

As per the tradition and rule of transfer, Mahant Swami was transferred to Rajkot. It was S.Y. 2006. In the month of Jyeshtha Mahant Swami arrived at Rajkot. As Rajkot is a big city, it requires more saints, hence Purani Swami Vasudevprasadji and Purani Shreeharidasji etc. five to six other saints also came to help Shree Mahant Swami.

A true saint Mahant Swami came to Rajkot temple. As Rajkot temple is a source of very good income, some people did not like it. They created various kinds of troubles. Because of it, such atmosphere was created that Mahant Swami became dejected.

Though Mahant Swami was appointed for two years to Rajkot, some intriguing people plotted against him. They created false reasons and got him transferred to a far away costal place

Timbi near Jafrabad. Mahant Swami was a desireless saint. He did not care for appointment or transfer. He was much engrossed in the Bhagawan Shree Hari but the behaviour of the leaders of the Satsang towards him was totally wrong and full of injustice.

Mahant Swami felt some perplexity in his mind because Timbi area was far away and Swami had never worked in that area and he did not know Haribhaktas of that area. Moreover, Mahant Swami had not sufficient saints with him. As Swami was a simple and straightforward saint, mostly the people would not like to become his companion saint. Swami was also a different kind of saint, so he had no fascination for the things or even for disciples. Therefore, very few saints were with him, one Jogiswami and second was Gavaiya Govind prakash Swami. Due to an intriguing atmosphere in Satsang, Swami became dejected. At that time, Swami Ramsukhdasji was moving in Mansa area near Timbi. He was an extremely pious saint. He had pleased Shreeji Maharaj by doing lacs of "Dandvat Pranam". Perhaps none has done 'Dandvat Pranam' as many as Swami Ramsukhdasji.

Knowing about worries of Mahant Swami, Swami Ramsukhdasji sent a message, "Swami, please do not worry. I will help you and will give you saints also to work in the villages". On receiving this message, Swami became glad and decided to go to Timbi. After leaving the charge of Rajkot temple, Swami came to Gurukul. With the arrival of Mahant Swami, Shastriji Maharaj became very glad. Shastriji Maharaj was always living as per the liking of Mahant Swami. The foundation stone of Rajkot Gurukul was also laid at the pious hands of Mahant Swami. Shastriji Maharaj was aware of the intriguing atmosphere of Rajkot temple. He gave patience and warmth to Swami and requested him not to be gloomy.

Mahant Swami had fever. He wanted to live in Jetpur for some days, before going to Timbi.

Let Jogi to be at Jetpur

Jetpur is the place of Throne of Shree Hari. Incarnation of Uddhav, Sadguru Ramanand Swami had entrusted his throne (Headship of the Sampraday) to Shree Hari at Jetpur. A Great capable saint Shree Balmukunddasji Swami has created a temple here and Kothari Swami Harikrushnadasji lived there. He was also a pious and capable saint. He was reputed in the entire Satsang Society. He had great affection for Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. The pair of Kothari Swami and Shastriji Maharaj was being praised much in the Satsang Society. As it is a place of Throne of Shree Hari, Mahant Swami and Jogi Swami had liked to live here to do Bhajan.

Jogi Swami addressed Mahant Swami as Manat Swami. Mostly the Haribhaktas were also knowing Mahant Swami as 'Manat Swami'. Now onward story in the words of Jogi Swami himself:

"Manat Swami told me, 'I want to go to Jetpur but do not want to tell this to Shastriji because if I tell, he will not allow me to go'. In the meanwhile, Kothari Swami Harikrushnadasji came to Rajkot from Jetpur. He also requested Manat Swami to come to Jetpur.

Manat Swami said, 'But Shastri will not permit, then what to do?' Kothari Swami said, 'Don't worry, I will ask Shastriji'. In the meanwhile, Shashtriji arrived. All the three sat in the Verandah of press behind 'Sadhu Ashram'. I was also with them. All the three senior saints discussed many things. Particularly they were worried about dirty atmosphere

prevailing in the Satsang at that time. What a good original tradition of Shreeji Maharaj was! What an adverse change has taken place in today's dirty atmosphere of Satsang!! Not many years have elapsed after the departure of Shreeji Maharaj to Akshardham, and none can imagine that the reverence of Shreeji Maharaj would be forgotten to such an extent. Thus all the three saints were worried about 'Satsang'

At last, Kothari Swami Harikrushnadasji slightly asked Shastriji 'If you gladly permit, I want to take Manat Swami to Jetpur'. Shastriji said, 'At present, it will be good, if Swami live with me. You know, I have started this service activity of Gurukul. So many difficulties are coming, most of them from satsang itself. In such a difficult time, if I can have the company of a saint like Manat Swami, I can get mental warmth and relief.' Kothari Swami said, 'You are right but I will not detain him long at Jetpur. He will live at Jetpur for some days and then will return here. Thus after much persuasion, Shastriji gave his consent to take Manat Swami to Jetpur.

The news of transfer of Manat Swami spread rapidly in the nearby villages. The people of 'ruler Community' (Durbars) and many Haribhaktas came to see Swamiji. They all had much affection for Mahant Swami. All the Haribhaktas requested Mahant Swami to come to their villages.

In view of pure love of those innocent Haribhaktas of villages, Mahant Swami consented and moved among those villages for some days and delighted the devotees. Mahant Swami was a saint full of compassion. He was unable to see sorrow of any Haribhakta. Whenever, he would see the Haribhaktas' sorrow, he would, with compassion in his heart, request Shree Hari to remove their sufferings. On hearing the

prayer of Mahant Swami, Shree Hari removed the sorrows of thousands of Haribhaktas and made their wishes come true.

After sanctifying the surrounding villages of Rajkot, Mahant Swami came to Jetpur.

Words of Consolation

With the arrival of Manat Swami in Jetpur, the devotees of Jetpur became very glad. Once, after completion of 'Aarti', Swami was doing 'Pradaxina' (moving around the temple from left to right), Swami had some fever. I was also doing 'Pradaxina' with him. On the path of 'Pradaxina' behind the temple, Swami caught my hand and said, "Jogi, now it is not good to live in this world. Troubles are coming without any reason. Sometimes we had inspired (somebody) for the service to the God, but we had never asked anything for ourselves. Yet the people are talking as they wish. See where we are thrown by the leaders of Satsang? We do not know anybody in Timbi. What shall we do there? Now I am not willing to live in this world."

I said, "Swami, why are you speaking so? I will let you spit in the palm of my hand but please you may not leave us helpless. I will serve as you say and will make the Hari Bhaktas glad."

Swami did not speak. Fever gone and he felt somewhat better. Again Swami came to Rajkot from Jetpur and from Rajkot, arrived at Una by train.

In Una temple, it was a turn of Purani Madhavprasaddasji and Shastri Harikeshavdasji to serve in the temple. They had affection for Swamiji. They became very glad to see Mahant Swami. Swami Ramsukhdasji, who was moving in Mansa area, also met Mahant Swami, hence he became very

glad. Mahant Swami stayed at Una upto Dev Diwali (11th day of first half of Kartik month). Then on full moon day, Swami arrived at Mota Samadhiyala where he stayed for some days. After touring nearby villages, Swami came to Nana Samadhiyala in Magsar month.

Shadows of Sorrow

The villages of Timbi area felt fortunate with the arrival of Mahant Swami. With the Darshan and talks of the Swami, the devotees were getting immense peace. A the river of compassion of Swamiji was constantly flowing. This was the saint, not requiring money, respect or regard from the world. He was only to give world. As the rainy clouds rain selflessly, this saint was to rain compassion on this world. In these villages, Swamiji created many miracles and made true the wishes of many people. The old Haribhaktas, who had been with Swamiji, when they remember those incidents, their eyes become full of tears even today.

Now Mahant Swami was joining his attention more and more with Shreeji Maharaj. The decision to leave this world was becoming stronger in his heart day by day. In the meanwhile Shreeji Maharaj gave his divine 'Darshan' to Jogi Swami and gave him a sign that now Mahant Swami would go to Akshardham.

Let us see that divine incident in the words of Pujya Jogi Swami:

While moving in the villages of Timbi area, wherever Mahant Swami went the whole atmosphere became full of devotion. I was cooking the meal and was offering 'Thal' to the God and then I was serving the meal to Swami and also to

Haribhaktas and was making them happy. One day we were in Samadhiyala. At night after remembering Shreeji Maharaj, I went to sleep. At midnight, Shreeji Maharaj gave me Darshan. I saw that Shreeji Maharaj has come to take Mahant Swami with Him to Akshardham. Swami would go leaving me alone here. With such a thought, I felt much sorrow. My heart became full of sorrow and I burst into tears.

Shreeji Maharaj disappeared and I became restless. I moved Mala for the whole night. I wept the whole night and constantly prayed to Shreeji Maharaj: 'O Maharaj! You may please do not make us supportless.'

I could see that Maharaj took away Swami but Swami was still alive and was sitting before me. So how could I tell this to anybody? If I tell, listeners would think me mad. But I was feeling in my mind that now Swami will not live in this world. Surely, he will go to Akshardham.

A thought arose in my mind. Swami is a word-accomplished saint, therefore, before he leaves his body, I shall beg something from Swami with which I can please Maharaj. But again I thought if I will ask for something, Swami will think that this Jogi considers me dead; therefore I abandoned the idea of asking for something.

Where is Jogi ?

In Nana Samadhiyala, in the early morning, Mahant Swami would go to the farm of Pragjibhai daily to take bath and after returning to the temple, he would perform his Pooja. Once Swami had a fast, therefore he had not gone to the farm but took his bath at the temple. Gavaiya Govindprakash Swami,

Jogi Swami etc. two / three saints had gone to the farm. These saints completed their bath.

Jogi Swami also, after completing his bath, sat aside to meditate. Other saints, however, forgot him. After completion of daily morning bath etc., they all returned to the temple leaving behind Jogi Swami at the farm, who was engrossed in the meditation. When those saints reached the temple, Mahant Swami asked, "Where is Jogi?" His words were full of love and affection for his unique disciple. When Mahant Swami asked them, then only they realised that they had left Jogi Swami at the farm and had returned to the temple without looking behind.

When Mahant Swami knew that Jogi Swami was left behind at the farm, he said to one saint 'let us go to the farm to bring Jogi back. Shreeji Maharaj has prohibited the saints to walk alone. Jogi is firm in maintaining this order hence he will not come back alone.'

As Dhaumya Rishi was set out in search of his disciples Aaruni and Upamanyu, Mahant Swami set out to search Jogi Swami.

Here at the farm, Jogi Swami was engrossed in meditating upon the Murti of Shreeji Maharaj. He was not aware of time and place. With a great love in his heart, he was remembering Shreeji Maharaj.

Mahant Swami reached the farm. He continued to see Jogi Swami with love and affection for some time. At last Jogi Swami woke up from the meditation and saw his preceptor (Guru) before him. Much time had elapsed. He became aware of it. He rose and bowed to Mahant Swami and said, "Swami! I could not keep awareness and became late. So you had to come to take me".

Mahant Swami said, "Jogi, nobody can keep awareness as you keep." Saying this, he put his both hands on the head of Jogi Swami. Those hands were full of grace and that grace was spreading into the entire body of Jogi Swami. It was a thought of Jogi Swami to ask something to please Shreeji Maharaj. Mahant Swami fulfilled that desire of Jogi Swami without demanding by him. Mahant Swami filled divinity of Shreeji Maharaj into Jogi Swami.

Endowment of Divinity

Once Mahant Swami was staying in Samadhiyala. At that time, the farmers had sown cumin (JIRU) in their fields. Cumin can bring good price but the farming of cumin is risky. Cumin is a very sensitive crop. In soft and favourable atmosphere only can it grow. If the atmosphere deteriorates slightly, the crop can fail. On that day, unfavourable atmosphere was developing for cumin in Samadhiyala. There were signs of unseasonal rain. Dark clouds were looming in the sky. It was raining slowly. The farmers were worried.

It was night. Mahant Swami was giving discourse in the temple but the listeners were unable to concentrate their minds in the discourse. Their minds were distracted by the fear of crop failure.

Mahant Swami could see their anxiety and worries and he asked, 'Why are you all restless?'

The Haribhaktas said, 'O kind Swamiji! We can't say.'

Swami said, "Please tell us what the matter is?"

Haribhaktas said, 'Swami, today our mind is not in the discourse, but in the cumin. The dark clouds are about to rain.'

Mild sprinkling has already started. This unseasonal rain will spoil our crop of cumin. Swami, you are a capable saint. Please, kindly stop this unseasonal rain.'

Mahant Swami was a very kind saint. He was unable to see anybody's suffer. On hearing the request of Haribhaktas, Mahant Swami's heart became merciful. 'Oh ! if the crop of these devotees fail, then how they would be afflicted He thought for a while and then suddenly seeing Jogi Swami, he smiled slowly and said, "Do one thing. You may request Jogi Swami and Jogi Swami may pray to Hanumanji Maharaj. Hanumanji Maharaj can pursue the king Indra to stop this unseasonal rain".

The Haribhaktas requested Jogi Swami as Mahant Swami had suggested.

Jogi Swami was perplexed for a while and said, 'Swami, What can I do?'

Mahant Swami again seeing Jogi Swami said, "O Goodself! What I can do, you can do. Therefore do it for the good of the Haribhaktas.'

With these words of capable saint, Jogi Swami prayed to Hanumanji Maharaj, "O Kashtabhanjan Dev! Please protect the crops of these devotees.'

Hanumanji Maharaj heard the request of this true saint. With the prayer of Jogi Swami, sprinkling rain stopped. With the grace of Pavanputra (son of Deity wind) Hanumanji, the wind started blowing and it dispersed the dark clouds. Thus, with the prayer of Jogi Swami, the crop of cumin was protected or else we can say that as Mahant Swami had taken the decision to leave this world, he endowed his divinity in Jogi Swami for the good and welfare of this world before leaving this world. Jogi Swami was not aware of it at that time. The witness of this

incident Dhana Bhagat is still alive in Samadhiyala. At that time, Dhana Bhagat was fifteen sixteen years old. He had great affection for Mahant Swami. He was always moving with Mahant Swami.

Once at night Dhana Bhagat was massaging the legs of Mahant Swami. Meanwhile, Mahant Swami became extremely kind. He got up and exclaimed, 'O child! Ask whatever you want.'

Dhana Bhagat was suddenly stunned to see the roaring sea of kindness. He could not speak.

After a while, as the tide subsided and became silent, Mahant Swami again went to sleep.

When Dhana Bhagat became mature and understanding, his repentance was endless.

On remembering that incident even today, he says 'I had seen many miracles of Mahant Swami. I knew that Mahant Swami is a great saint but when he told me to ask, unluckily I became stunned and could not speak anything, otherwise it would have been very good for me.'

Arrival at Timbi

In the first half of Posh month of S.Y. 2008, Mahant Swami came to Timbi from Samadhiyala. Mahant Swami's Guru Pujya Gopinathdasji and great capable saint Balmukunddasji Swami frequently visited Timbi. With the blessings of both these saints, Bhuta Sheth of this village had three sons.

Purani Swami Gopinathdasji wanted to renovate the temple of Timbi and also wanted to do pratishtha of Hanumanji and Ganapatiji in the temple.

Bhuta Sheth of Timbi was rich. He was like a friend of Purani Swami. Purani Swami had said to Bhuta Sheth, "O Bhutiya! You got no son. If you serve for Pratishtha of Hanumanji and Ganapati, I will give you sons.'

Bhuta Sheth said, "On your words I can serve but how can I know that these sons are given by Hanumanji and Ganapatiji?" Swami said, "Baniya! You are very clever. O Bhutiya! if you cannot trust, then listen, if a son is born on fourteenth day of second half of Aaso month and if he is slightly dark skinned and also brave like Hanumanji then believe it as given by Hanumanji. If a son is born on Ganesh Chaturthi and if he has signs like Ganapatiji, and then believe it as given by Ganeshji". Bhuta Sheth bowed down to Swami and decided to serve as Swami said.

Bhuta Sheth, on the words of Swami, got constructed two small temples of Hanumaji and Ganapatiji. Purani Swami established Hanumanji and Ganapatiji therein with great festivity. This occasion was graced by disciple of Gunatitanand Swami, Swami Balmukunddasji also.

Purani Swami said to Balmukunddasji Swami, "Swami I have given a promise of two sons to this Bhuta Sheth. Please pray to Shreeji Maharaj to fulfill his desire.'

Balmukunddasji Swami said, 'Purani Swami! As you have said, with the grace of Shreeji Maharaj, he will surely have two sons. But do you know? Baniya loves interest more than the principal hence Shreeji Maharaj will give one more son as interest also.'

Thus with the blessings of great ascetics, Bhuta Sheth got three sons. The eldest son Mohan Sheth was born on the fourteenth day of second half of Aaso month. He was slightly dark skinned and was so valiant like Hanumanji. Even the outlaws were frightened by him.

Second son Hargovindbhai was born exactly on Ganesh Chaturthi with signs like Ganapati i.e. having big ears, long nose and a pot-belly.

Third son was the interest, namely Chhaganbhai. Thus, Timbi village is having memories and connections of great saints.

With the arrival of Mahant Swami in Timbi, the merchants, Koli Pitha Bhagat and worshipper Narbheram etc. devotees became very glad. All knew about the ability of Mahant Swami. It was quite natural as Shree Mahant Swami was totally engrossed in Shree Hari.

In the meanwhile, the festival of Makar Sankranti arrived. The devotees of Timbi requested Mahant Swami, "Swami, please sanctify our houses and shops with your pious feet" The kind Saint moved to the houses and shops of devotees and pleased them.

As Swami was in Timbi, the devotees of nearby villages came for Darshan of the Swami. As Swami was kind a like mother, he would not allow the devotees to go without taking meal at the temple.

Mahant Swami called Jogi Swami and said, "Jogi, these Haribhaktas have come, we have to prepare and to serve them the meal".

On the words of Mahant Swami, Jogi Swami would gladly prepare *Shak* (cooked vegetable) and Rotla and serve it

to the devotees with affection. Jogi Swami had said to Mahant Swami in Jetpur, 'Swami, I will serve as you wish and will please the Haribhaktas'.

It is difficult to serve food to many people daily. However, Jogi Swami was determined to please Mahant Swami. Therefore, he was not considering it as difficult and Mahant Swami was also very much glad with the faith of Jogi Swami in service activities.

The Volition of Service Fulfilled

[Note: Now onward the incidents are narrated in the words of Jogi Swami himself]

It was an evening in Timbi. Mahant Swami was suffering from slight cold. Swami had taken Rotlo, Bhaji and milk. After some time, he felt some disorder in stomach. Swami wanted to vomit. Hence he caught my hand and said, "Jogi, let us go out, it seems that I will have to vomit."

I joined palms of both my hands and placed them before Swami and said, "Swami! Please vomit into it."

Swami said, "Oh! In hands?"

I said, "Yes Swami."

Swami vomitted in my hands and then I threw the vomit away. With the earth dust, I cleaned my hands. The ends of sheet had become dirty. I cleaned them. Swami saw me with great compassion and became very glad. In the 'Pradaxina' of Jetpur temple, I had said, "I will let you spit in my palms. That volition was fulfilled by Mahant Swami before going to the Akshardham.

Unique Food Server

A day before he ascended to Akshardham, Mahant Swami sent a message to the devotees of Nana Samadhiyala to come to Timbi with their Pooja. 'You shall not come without Pooja' Swami ordered, Pragjibhai, Lava Bhagat, Vashrambhai, Dhana Bhagat etc. eight to ten Haribhaktas came to Timbi but without taking their Pooja with them as they could not understand the deep meaning of Mahant Swami's words 'Do not come without your Pooja But do come taking your Pooja with you.'

It was a time of winter. There was a good crop of radish (Mooli) in the farm of Haribhaktas; therefore, they brought radish for the Thal.

Mahant Swami asked, 'have you brought your Pooja?'

Devotees said, "No, Swami."

Swami said, "Oh! Despite my instruction you did not bring your Pooja?"

The devotees said, "Swami! We thought that after doing 'Darshan' we will return home."

Swami very seriously said, "May it be as Maharaj wishes." Swami thought that it would be good if at the time of going to Akshardham, these simple and innocent Bhaktas stay nearby. However, it is difficult to understand the wishes of great saints.

Mahant Swami said to me, "Jogi! These Haribhaktas would have become hungry! You prepare Rotlas and I am preparing *Khariyu* (one kind of vegetable prepared from radish - cooked radish.) Govindprasad has pain in his hand, let him rest."

As per the order of Swami, I prepared 'Rotlas' and Swami himself prepared *Khariyu* with the leaves of Radish. Rotla and *Khariyu* were served to Shreeji Maharaj. Then Haribhaktas were seated in a line. Swami himself served *Khariyu* with great insistence to Haribhaktas and with great love.

The devotees said "Swami, now it is too much." Swami said, "O Bhaktas! You will get radish and even 'Khariyu' to eat but henceforth you will not get such a server."

The Haribhaktas could not understand the hidden meaning of Swami's words. As they had not brought with them their Pooja, all returned to their villages.

Last Farewell

It was S.Y. 2008 year. Month of 'Maha'. It was a day before 'Vasant Panchami'. In the afternoon, Swami was not well. He had slight cold. Govindprakash said, 'Jogi, let us go to farm for taking bath.' I thought that presently I should not go anywhere leaving the Swami behind.

I said to GovindPrakash, "You may go. I do not want to take bath. I will remain here with Swamiji." Thereafter Govind Swami went for a bath.

After some time Swami caught my hand and said, "you see, now I don't want to live in this world. I want to go to Akshardham. Now in a very short time, Maharaj will take me to Akshardham. Do not tell it to anybody." On hearing this, my heart was filled with sorrow.

'Swami, what are you speaking? If you go, what will be our position? With your grace, many people are happy. Please do not make us helpless.'

Swami said, 'God is for all. He will take care of you also. Now I do not want to live in this world. Take my Pooja. Now onward you may worship it.' Then Swami said 'Jogi, now onward, you may live in 'kul' (means live in the Gurukul). Mahant Swami called, 'Gurukul as 'kul' and he was true also. Gurukul can be considered as the family of 'Jogis' (ascetics)!

I said, 'Swami, let us call Shastriji. He is at Fatsar.' If you go in his absence then he will scold me why I did not inform him."

Swami said, "He would have much work, therefore he is not to be called".

I requested thrice. In the meanwhile, Mohan Sheth arrived, hence Swami closed the matter.

Knowing that Swami was not feeling well, Mohan Sheth said, "We should call Shastriji Maharaj'. He wrote a chit, gave it to Pitha Bhagat, and said, "You may soon give this chit to Shastriji at Fatsar."

Pitha Bhagat went to Fatsar on his mare. Shastriji had gone to Droneshvar for bath. After bowing down to Shastriji Maharaj, he gave the 'chit' to Shastriji. After reading the 'chit', Swami asked 'Bhagat', "how is Swami? "

Bhagat said, "As such there is nothing to worry, He is suffering from slight cold".

Swami said, "Then I will come to see Swamiji after attending the festival of Vasant Panchami at Una.

With the message of Shastriji Pitha Bhagat returned.

Here in Timbi, it was ten at night. On that day, Swami had taken no food. I asked, "Swami, you may please take some food. You have taken nothing today."

Swami said, "Go and bring cool 'Rotlo' if it is there."

I said, 'I will not give you cool 'Rotlo.' If you say yes, I will prepare 'Shiro' or Khichadi. It will not take much time.'

Swami said, "But you are in service since morning, you might be tired".

I said "Swami, don't worry about me. I am not at all tired"

Swami said, "Then go and prepare some Khichadi (hotch-potch)". I immediately prepared Khichadi, served it to the God and then served to Swami. Swami sat to take his meal. Meanwhile, I went to lull the Thakorji to sleep and returned to Swamiji.

Swami took some Khichadi and said, 'Take it away now.' I do not like to take more. As you were insisting much, I took some food.

In the meanwhile, worshipper Narbheram came and said, 'As Swami is not well, I will stay here today'. At that time, Pitha Bhagat returned from Fatsar and gave the news about Shastriji.

Swami said, 'As the Maharaj wishes.'

He gave the prasadi of Khichadi to Pitha Bhagat. Bhagat took it to home.

Narbherambhai thought that Swami is not well, if I give an herbal pill to him, he can have relief. Thinking this, he went home and brought a pill and said 'Swami, please take this pill.'

Swami said 'I don't want to take it. Asafetida will be there in the pill.'

Narbherambhai said, 'Swami, there is nothing objectionable in it'

Yet Swami did not take it.

Swami, in a sitting position, was moving Mala. He had covered his head. I was near him. It should be two o'clock at night. At that time, Swami took my wrist and again left it.

After some time again Swami took my wrist in firm grip. I gave some water to Swamiji. Poojari Narbherambhai came running. Govind Swami woke up. He also gave water to Swami. Swami was doing 'Jap' of 'Swaminarayan', 'Swaminarayan' and doing this 'Jap', he went to Akshardham without any kind of difficulty. No saliva, no sound and no stress, simply in a sitting position, remembering Shreeji Maharaj, independently he went to Akshardham.

Thus on one side on the pious day of 'Vasant Panchami' (fifth day of first half of Maha month) in the early morning Swami went to Akshardham and on the other hand, in the early morning, Shreeji Maharaj gave his Darshan to Jagjivanbhai and Hargovindbhai of Tombi and said, 'We are taking Mahant Swami to Akshardham.'

They both came swiftly to the temple. The leg of Jagjivanbhai was swelling, but after having 'Darshan' of Shreeji Maharaj, the leg became quite all right.

In Nana Samadhiyala, I had Darshan of Shreeji Maharaj coming to take Mahant Swami. Thereafter, exactly after one month Shreeji Maharaj took him to Akshardham.

The news of Mahant Swami's departure for Akshardham reached Una. Shastriji Maharaj hurriedly came to Timbi. He felt remorse, as he could not see Swami and could not talk to him. His heart was filled with sorrow; yet he gave solace to all. Haribhaktas and saints placed the body of Swami in a Palanquin, and with Dhoon-Bhajan went to the outskirts of the village on

the bank of the river Rupen. Here the body of Swamiji was cremated with Dhoon-Bhajan-Kirtan. A small memorial has been erected at this place.

Divine Darshan of Mahant Swami

Jogi Swami had immense love for Mahant Swami. His preceptor-disciple relationship with Mahant Swami was unique. He could not do without Swami even for a moment. The preceptor-disciple tradition in Bhakti Marg (Devotion cult) is different from the preceptor-disciple tradition of ascetics. Dryness can be seen in the knowledge-oriented way of salvation but such dryness can not be found in saints of love cult. The attitude of knowledge cult saints would be like salty land. In such a land, love cannot sprout. At the same time, the minds of love cult saints always are fertile. Various kinds of flowers blossom in it and fruits of Joy ripen in it.

Jogi Swami had become restless after the departure of Mahant Swami. His state of mind was just as if a calf separated from its mother cow and small children of 'Kunj' birds separated from their mother. Jogi Swami frequently remembered his preceptor with tears in his eyes. He was unable to eat or sleep. With the pain of separation in his heart, Swami kept weeping.

Many days passed in this way. Jogi Swami came to Samter from Timbi. It was a day of 'Hari Jayanti' (Ninth day of first half of a month). It was noon. Jogi Swami was weeping remembering Mahant Swami. He thought, 'Oh! When Swami, at the time of going to 'Dham', would have asked me to ask for a boon, I would have asked to go to Dham with him. It would have been quite good. Now it is difficult to live without Swami.'

As he was thinking in this way, the sky filled with brightness. Mahant Swami in a form of divine brightness came down from the sky. He had a Thal of Prasad in his hand. Swami with a smiling face stood before Jogi Swami.

Jogi Swami was seeing with great surprise and words came out from his mouth 'Oh Swami you are?! Where have you gone, leaving us support-less here?

Mahant Swami said "O why are you weeping? Do you consider me as dead? We are always with you. Take this 'Thal' of 'Prasadi.' I have brought it from Akshardham for you. Take this."

Jogi Swami said, "Today is Hari-Jayanti - a day of fast for me. How can I take the Prasad?"

Swami, with smiling face said, "You are continuously doing this."

With the Darshan of Gurudev, the affliction of Jogi Swami was gone. The heart was full of happiness. With joy, he asked his Gurudev, "Swami, you have arrived from Dham there may be so many worlds and obstructions in the way. How have you come here, passing all those difficulties? "

Swami said, "Maharaj is with us. No obstruction can come in our way and you have our association, hence no obstruction can come in your way also."

Jogi Swami said, "Swami, you went to Akshardham and many affectionate devotees couldn't see you. They are much too pained, so you may please stay here for some days".

Mahant Swami said, "O Jogi, you have still remained so innocent. What is good in this world to stay here?" saying so with smiling face Mahant Swami disappeared.

Jogi Swami remembered this incident many times and sometimes he used to weep and say, "It would have been good if Swami had taken me along with him."

We saints were praying 'Swami, Mahant Swami was kind enough to leave you behind here to make thousands of people happy. Otherwise what would have been our situation?"

Need not Fear

While journeying around in Timbi area, once in the evening, Jogi Swami arrived in Trakuda village. His Guru-brother Gavaiya Swami Govindprakashdasji was with him. There was no temple in Trakuda at that time. Therefore, whenever saints happened to come, they stayed at a separate upper story house of leading Haribhakta Patel Haribhai. Jogi Swami and Gavaiya Swami also lodged there.

Haribhai had constructed new house and had not gone to live there. He wished that Saints should first stay in this new house, prepare 'Thal' of the God and sanctify the place, then only he will go to live therein. He requested the saints to prepare the Thal in the new house. Jogi Swami did not take meal in the evening, yet he was not at all averse to in preparing meal for the accompanying saints.

On the request of Haribhai, Jogi Swami arrived in the new house with the saints. It was evening. Darkness was spreading. In those olden days, there was no arrangement of electricity. A small lamp was lighted. As per the rule of saints, the house was to be cleaned before starting the cooking.

With the 'Darshan' of whom, the vices of the heart vanish, such a Jogi Swami took a broom in his hand and started sweeping. The house had remained unused for long. In a wall

of this house, in the downward part, there was a recess. While cleaning the house in the dim light of a lamp, Swami stretched his hand in that recess. There was a cobra in that recess. As Jogi Swami fumbled with his hand into that recess, the cobra rose up spreading its hood and created a hissing sound. On seeing a serpent Swami uttered, 'Swaminarayan, Swaminarayan'.

Gavaiya Swami asked, 'Jogi, what is there?'

Jogi Swami said, 'see in this recess.'

Gavaiya Swami saw the serpent and with fear he shouted, 'O Jogi, go away. It is a serpent there'.

However, Jogi Swami with broom in his hand remained unmoved, remembering Shree Hari.

The serpent also, with a touch of a real saint became fortunate, remained there for some time, and then went away.

Gavaiya Swami relaxed. He asked Jogi Swami, 'Jogi, on seeing that serpent, did you not fear? What would have been if it had bitten you?'

Jogi Swami said, "Why be frightened? Everything happens as Maharaj wishes. We have done nothing wrong of that serpent, then how should it bite us? It may be some soul degenerated after death. Today it is liberated.

Thus, Shree Hari protected Jogi Swami from a serpent and at the same time, he tested his faith (*Aatmanishtha*).

Who have taken the shelter at the feet of the God, need not fear.

Hundi Being Accepted

Next day morning, Haribhai said to Swami. "Swami, our buffalo has given birth to a young one for the first time just before some days; however she is not allowing anybody to milch for the last two days. In the olden days it was believed that, if cows or buffaloes do not allow to milch (milk), it would create great difficulty for the owner's family."

Haribhai added, "Swami, we have the shelter of Shreeji Maharaj hence we have no trust of anybody else. We do not believe in charmed string (Dora-Dhaga). So please pray to Shreeji Maharaj so that the buffalo may allow to milch it."

In those days, the superstitions prevailed widely. The people believed in tantric remedies. If cattle or children became sick, they resorted to charmers.

The saints of Bhagawan Swaminarayan, by moving in the villages removed those superstitions. The only creator is Shree Hari, so one must keep faith in Him only, not in anything else.

Everything happens as per His wish. Such type of faith was strengthened in 'Satsangis' by the saints. The saints have liberated the illiterate people of villages from the wrong faith and illusion of black magic.

As profound faith was in the talk of Haribhai, Jogi Swami became glad.

Jogi Swami prayed to Shreeji Maharaj, 'O Maharaj! You are the only creator and destroyer. You may please fulfill the wish of this devotee!'

Thereafter Jogi Swami gave water of '*Abhishek*' of Maharaj and said, "Please take this sacred water; let the buffalo

to drink some of it. You may sprinkle some water on the body of buffalo and on the udders also the uttering 'Swaminarayan, Swaminarayan' Shree Hari will do well."

Haribhai took that sacred water and as Swami said while remembering of Shreeji Maharaj made the buffalo to drink some water and sprinkled the remaining water on the body of the buffalo. With the sacred water, the buffalo became purified.

A miracle happened. When the wife of Haribhai, tried to milch, the buffalo gave much milk and filled the whole vessel.

Before going to Akshardham, by holding the wrist of Jogi Swami, Mahant Swami had put divine ability in him. It became evident on this occasion. Thereafter, that ability continued to work for many years, even until today.

Thus moving in the villages Swami arrived in Junagadh. Here in the memory of Mahant Swami, God 's Thal and meal (Rasoi) was arranged. Shastriji Maharaj also arrived from Rajkot.

A 'Katha' was also arranged in the memory of Mahant Swami with great fervour and pomp. The saints and Haribhaktas gathered. All experienced the vacuum of the great saint Mahant Swami in their hearts.

Shastriji Maharaj gave solace to all with his discourse and pacified the hearts of all. That festival really became divine in the memory of Mahant Swami.

Remembering Lineage

After the 'Aksharwas' of Mahant Swami, Jogi Swami moved in the villages with Gavaiya Swami for one year. At that time, Gavaiya Swami had no companion saint. Therefore, he insisted that Jogi Swami should accompany me.

Jogi Swami moved with Gavaiya Swami but now the words of his Guru that 'You shall live in the 'Kul'; you shall live in 'kul" were constantly buzzing in his mind.

'Gurukul, the Land of penance, was calling him. He was also now very eager to live in the 'Gurukul' as per the words of his Gurudev Mahant Swami. However, there was no alternative but to remain with Gavaiya Swami as his companion saint.

In the meanwhile, Gavaiya Swami arranged to give initiation to a young 'Bhagat' as a saint, hence his problem of companion saint solved. Now Jogi Swami slowly said to Gavaiya Swami, "Now you have got a saint companion, so if you gladly permit, I want to live in Gurukul to do 'Bhajan'. Gavaiya Swami knew very well the likings and nature of Jogi Swami. Therefore, he said, "Swami, I have no objection. You may gladly do as you wish. Gurukul is also ours. You may surely live in Gurukul. I will continue to move around the villages."

With the permission of his elder Guru Brother, Jogi Swami came to Rajkot and in the pious land of Gurukul, he started his unbroken pilgrimage of penance. Nishkulanand Swami has written:

"Maine Mera kul Sambharya, Mat Karna Kou Zaghara

Mai hun Aadi-Anadi Aa to Sarve Upadhi"

Once Jogi Swami was telling the divine story of Mahant Swami's departure for Akshardham. While telling that story Jogi Swami, with said great spirit "Shastri! Swami went to Akshardham but after holding my wrist. Now I am not afraid of anything. A capable saint like Mahant Swami had caught my hand."

I requested Jogi Swami, "As Mahant Swami had caught your hand, you may hold our hand."

Swami said, "From your childhood, when you were stringing the flowers, I have caught your hand. If I had not done so, you would be wandering anywhere".

This land has never remained without saints. When great capable saint Mahant Swami departed, Shree Hari gave given us equally capable saint Jogi Swami.

Eva re maliya amane jogiya, Zalyo Hari E Jeno Hath

Akhand Rahe Hari Antare, Pal Bhar Mele Nahi Re Sangath.

Unending Supply

In S.Y. 2014, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj arranged the first Japa-Yagna at Rajkot. On the day of its conclusion, an ocean of human beings gathered and stock of sweet and food item started becoming empty one by one. Bhandari Swami (Swamiji in charge of kitchen) was worried. He told Shastriji, "How shall we tackle the situation? From where shall we arrange for 'Shiro'?"

Shastriji Maharaj immediately called Jogi Swami and said, "Jogi, pray to Maharaj, so that the 'Shiro' may not exhaust".

Jogi Swami went near the stock of Food. He lighted a lamp of Ghee, took Mala in his hands and sat near the pit, concentrated his mind in Shree Hari and said, "Please cover-up half of the pit by a cloth. Shree Hari will help."

For two and a half hours, the server volunteers continuously withdrew 'Shiro' from the pit to serve to the people, yet it remained unexhausted. The people were taking meal up to four O'clock in the afternoon. Not only that, the stock of

'Shiro' remained in excess. The same was sent nearby villages as 'Prasad'.

On that occasion Jogi Swami had said, "This has happened as Maharaj heard the prayer of Shastriji Maharaj. I was only a medium".

In the festivals celebrated by Gurukul or in the Murti Pratishtha ceremonies celebrated in the villages, whenever such problem arose, Jogi Swami used to sit to move the Mala remembering Shreeji Maharaj and with the prayer of Jogi Swami, Maharaj kept the stock of food items unexhausted.

Pilgrimage to Vadtal on Foot

Jogi Swami had much liking for Darshan of the God. He had more inclination to go for 'Darshan' to the temples created by Shree Hari Himself, whenever he got chance.

Once Jogi Swami wanted to go on pilgrimage of Vadtal on foot. Vadtal means the pinnacle of all the places of pilgrimage. Bhagawan Swaminarayan has created a temple here through Brahmanand Swami. The temple is in the shape of a lotus. Shree Hari Himself has installed His own Murti in the form of Shree Harikrishna Maharaj. Who will not wish to go on pilgrimage of Vadtal!

Jogi Swami said to Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, "I want to go on pilgrimage of Vadtal on foot. If you gladly permit, I will go."

Shastriji Maharaj said, "Jogi, I would be very glad to permit you, but who will go as your companion?"

Jogi Swami said, “Hariprasad Bhandari is also willing. If you allow, he will accompany me”.

Shastriji Maharaj said, “Jogi, you have found good companion. He is worthy to be your companion. So, you both may go. We will see you at Vadtal”.

Thus, after getting the permission of Shastriji Maharaj, both the saints proceeded on foot towards Vadtal. These saints did not require to prepare much. They did not require baggages and bundles to carry with them. A knapsack of Pooja, clothes (*Dhotiya*) and nothing else. They were not to worry for lodging and boarding. If by the grace of Shree Hari, they could get provisions, they would prepare hotch-potch and Rotla, otherwise they would, with peanuts or fruits, whichever is available. They would walk remembering Shree Hari and wherever night fell, they would rest. In the morning, they would wake up in time and after performing Pooja, again they would walk on the way to Vadtal.

After starting from the Gurukul, Swami proceeded towards Gadhpur. After taking bath in Sahastradhara, Narayandhara and Khalkhaliyo of Ghelo River, (the pious memorial places of Shreeji Maharaj) Swami arrived at Gadhpur.

Gadhpur means Shree Hari’s home, where Shree Hari lived for as many as thirty years. No other place in the world is as important as Gadhadra is! Here Shree Hari has done Pratishtha of Gopinathji Maharaj. Gopinathji Maharaj is as good as Shreeji Maharaj is.

Swami did the Darshan of Gopinathji Maharaj. Gopinathji Maharaj also smiled at Swamiji with graceful eyes. Swami stayed there for some time. He did much more Jap sitting before the Murti of Gopinathji Maharaj. He also moved in the Shreeji’s memorial places like the courtyard of Dada Khachar,

Neem-tree, Akshar-ordi, Laxmi wadi. Thereafter, again they started their journey to Vadtal. After departure from Gadhadra, Swami visited Radha-vav, Bhakti bag etc. places of pilgrimage and then arrived in Ugamedi.

Unique Recipe For *Bhindi* !!

A very funny incident occurred in Ugamedi. Whenever he remembers this incident, he laughs a lot and also makes others laugh.

Ugamedi is an important village in Gadhadra area. Leader of this village Haribhakta Laxmanbapa was very wise and was respected by the people. The saints also respected him. Laxmanbapa had much affection for Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj and the service activities of Gurukul. It was his keen desire that Jogi Swami should pay special visit to Ugamedi while going on pilgrimage on foot. At the insistence of Laxmanbapa, Jogi Swami arrived in Ugamedi. He lodged in the temple. With the arrival of Jogi Swami, Laxmanbapa and other devotees of Ugamedi became very glad. Jogi Swami was very eager to go ahead but in view of great insistence of Laxmanbapa, he had to stay there for two - three days.

One day in the early morning, Jogi Swami, after completion of his daily morning routine, was doing his Pooja. As it was a day of rest in the pilgrimage, Swami continued his Pooja for longer time. Bhandari Swami, after completion of his Pooja, was busy in the kitchen. In the meanwhile, a Haribhakta came and he laid a bunch of ripe banana before Swami. After some time Laxmanbapa came for the Darshan. He had brought with him fresh *Bhindi* (lady’s fingers). The *Bhindi* were quite

fresh, green and soft. Laxmanbapa did Darshan of the God and then put Bhindi before the God.

Laxmanbapa very well knew the nature of these true saints. He knew that these saints are not desirous of good food. So with a smiling face he said to Swami, ' "Swami! I have brought these Bhindi for you. These are quite fresh and soft, but I know you would not know how to eat these," Had it happened really so.

Bhandari Swami took Bhindi to the kitchen. One is to take much care in preparing the 'vegetable' with Bhindi. If due care is taken it would be good 'vegetable' (SHAK) otherwise it would become very sticky. In other vegetables, one is to add water but in the 'vegetable' of Bhindi, one can not add water. It is to be cooked in edible oil only.

As such, Hariprasad Swami was a good cook. He was able to arrange cooking of food for thousands of people but he was fond of novel experiments.

With much laughter while narrating the unique story of 'vegetable' of Bhindi, Swami said, ' Hariprasad took Bhindi to the kitchen. He also silently and secretly took a bunch of ripe Bananas. He would have thought that if he asks, Jogi Swami he would say 'no'. After washing Bhindi and without cleaning it, he cut it and moreover, he sizzled it in insufficient oil. Moreover, he added sour buttermilk and ripe banana into it. Then he also added grinded Groundnut into it.

No-where in the world such type of 'vegetable' would have been prepared so far.

Bhandari tried to prepare 'vegetable' but it became a sticky substance, no one would like to eat. Yet Hari Prasad was insisting me to eat the same.

I said, 'you may have it, I do not want.'

I did not take but he took it and remaining portion he kept covered. It smelled bad. I told him, "Throw it away, otherwise cattle would eat it and would become sick".

With laughter the Swami said, "That Laxmanbapa was truly saying that we the saints would not know how to eat Bhindi".

From Ugamed, Jogi Swami started his journey towards Dholera. In between, the day of Hari Jayanti came. Both the saints observed fast without taking even water. The pilgrimage continued. On the day of 'Dasam' the arrangement of meal could not be made, hence they took only groundnuts. Next day was Ekadashi and both the saints observed fast. Thus with Bhajan and Penance, they continued their pilgrimage on foot.

On the way, they arrived at a village. Swami thought to lodge here to pass the night. Again, he thought, "yet it is the day time. If we continue to walk we can reach the next village". Thinking so they proceeded further but it was the land of Bhal. The village seemed to be nearby but one could not reach quickly.

Both had observed fast and walking further was becoming difficult. The shadows of evening gathered. Darkness started to cover the land. Both were tired. Anyhow, they reached the next village. The name of the village was 'Aakrund'.

Night at 'Aakrund'

There was no 'Satsangi' in 'Aakrund '. Where to lodge to pass the night? It was a problem. On the way came a house of a 'Darbar'. Near the gate of his house, he was sitting on a bedstead in the verandah. Darbar was devout. On seeing the saints, he gladly welcomed them.

"Welcome! Maharaj! From where are you coming?"

Jogi Swami said, 'We are coming from Rajkot and going to Vadtal on foot.'

Darbar said, "Very good, please tell me if I can serve you in any way".

Swami said, "We want to stay for night here. Please show us a place where the ladies would not be frequenting".

Darbar said, "'Maharaj! You may stay here in the entrance place of my house, if you find it suitable. Here no lady will come, I will arrange."

Jogi Swami put his knapsack in the 'entrance hall'. As it was a Darbari hall, swords and shields were kept on the wall. Away in the Verandah, the cattle were tied. In one corner of that hall, a heap of onions was there. With the smell of onions, Jogi Swami was feeling uneasiness. He thought, "Here it will be difficult to pass the night amidst the smell of the onions'

Swami asked, "If any inn (*Dharma-Shala*) was there in this village, we will be more comfortable there."

Darbar said, "Maharaj! There is no such inn in our village. There is a Shrine of our Guru Madhavanandji, but we do not allow any ascetic to lodge there".

Swami asked, "Why?"

Darbar said, "Ascetics and mendicants are mostly habituated to smoke Beedi or Cigarettes which can make the place impure or polluted. That we can't afford because our Guru did not like such addiction.'

Swami said, "Darbar! We are not of that kind. We are inspiring people to shun such addictions. We also do not like such bad habits".

Darbar said, "Then there is no objection. Let me take you to the Shrine of our Guru".

Darbar took these saints to the place of Madhavanandji. The darkness had spread. Darbar arranged for a lantern. Looking to the holy place, the saints gladly lodged there. In the compound of the place, there was a well. Near the well, there was a bucket and a string. Swami thought, 'after doing our bath and Pooja In the early morning we will proceed further.'

Darbar asked "Maharaj what will you take in meal?"

Swami said, "Today is Ekadashi and we have observed fast, hence nothing to worry about the meal."

Darbar felt better in his heart with the Darshan of the true saints. He sat for some time and then took leave. Jogi Swami performed Aarti, prayer and '*Swabhavik Cheshta*' and then they went to sleep.

Both the saints were fasting for the last three days and were much tired also; hence, they went into a deep sleep. From the sky, Shree Hari was showering love and grace on their beloved saints. The place also became fortunate with the arrival of such saints.

Due to severe fatigue, they got deep sleep and were a little late in waking up. The sun had not yet risen. The dim light spread all over. In the meanwhile, women of the village started coming for Darshan of the Shrine.

Here there was no Parshad or Haribhakta with these saints. If they would come for Darshan of these saints, then no one was to prevent them.

Swami said to Bhandari Swami, 'O Hariprasad! Let us go. We do not want to stay here. Here we may have to face trouble of '*Maya*' (women's proximity). If water will be available

on the way ahead, we will take bath and perform 'Pooja'. Both the saints took their knapsacks of Pooja on the shoulder and started their journey further. As they came out of the place, they met a farmer. Jogi Swami handed over the lantern to him with an instruction to give it to Darbar.

Both the saints started walking, but in the dry land of Bhal, no place came where they could take bath and perform 'Pooja'.

Though they had fasts for the last three days, on the fourth day they continued their journey gladly remembering Shree Hari.

The sun was up in the sky spreading heat in the atmosphere of this extremely dry land of Bhal. There were no wells or farms like Saurashtra or Gujarat. As the day proceeds, due to the heat of the sun, very big lakes of mirage seem to be there but true water could not be found. In search of water on the way, they reached outskirts of the village 'Kharad'.

Divine Order To Take Care

Village 'Kharad' bears the memories of Shree Hari. Shree Hari had come here several times. Shree Hari served meal of Hotch-Potch and curd to His beloved saints on the bank of the pond of this village. The saints had observed fast. The Hotch-Potch was less and curd was more. The curd was very good. Shree Hari served some Hotch-Potch in the vessels of the saints and then served plenty of curd with both hands. There were a good number of Satsangi devotees in the village Kharad. Small and beautiful temple was also there. A Brahmin worshipper (Poojari) was performing 'Pooja' in the temple.

It was very early morning. The worshipper was sleeping in his bed. Shree Hari gave him 'Darshan'. His eyes opened and he saw Shreeji Maharaj in His divine form with divine light around. Poojari became overwhelmed with Joy.

Shree Hari said, "Poojari! My two saints have set out from Rajkot for the pilgrimage of Vadtal. Both the saints are hungry for last three days. They will arrive here in some time. Prepare for their lodging and boarding. Take care of them. Serve them the meal and serve them to please them."

After saying so, Shree Hari disappeared. Poojari was now waiting for the saints, whose recommendation was made by Shree Hari Himself.

Here Jogi Swami saw a pond in the outskirts of the village Kharad. It was 8 or 9 O'clock in the morning. They took bath to a solitary place near the pond and performed 'Pooja' peacefully under a tree. At around ten O'clock, they completed their 'Pooja' and came to the temple. In the temple, the 'Poojari' had done all the preparations as advised by Shree Hari Himself, and was eagerly waiting for these two.

When Jogi Swami entered into the compound of the temple, the 'Poojari' was cleaning the temple. As soon as he saw Jogi Swami, leaving the broom, he came forward and welcomed them with great Joy.

"Swami, Welcome! You are coming from Rajkot Gurukul, aren't you?"

Jogi Swami looked at the Poojari with surprise. Swami thought, 'we have never come here and never seen this Poojari, yet how could he recognise us?'

Swami asked, "Poojari! How come you know that we are from Rajkot Gurukul? How could you recognise us?"

Poojari said, "Oh my saints, your introduction has given by Shreeji Maharaj Himself. In the early morning today, Shreeji Maharaj gave me His 'Darshan' in person and said, 'My saints are coming. They are fasting for last three days. They have travelled a long way. Take good care of them'. See, on the recommendation of Shreeji Maharaj, I have prepared everything in advance. 'Thal' is also ready and I am waiting for you since long. I am a Brahmin, so please do not hesitate. Please lodge here and get ready to serve 'Thal' to the Maharaj."

On hearing this, Swami and Bhandari Swami both overwhelmed with joy. They forgot the fatigue.

Jogi Swami thought, 'Oh! Maharaj is taking much care of us.'

It is a rule of Maharaj. Whoever keeps unshakable faith in Him, he takes complete care of him. Jogi Swami has lived with unshakable total faith in Shree Hari, therefore Shree Hari takes care of him.

Jogi Swami served 'Thal' to the Thakoraji and took his meal on the fourth day. Years ago, Shree Hari had served Hotch-Potch and curd to the fasting saints in this village and now that incident was repeated. The devotees of the village insisted that the saints stay here for three / four days.

The Poojari had got great reverence. He was constantly thinking, 'How great these saints are, whose recommendation is made by Shree Hari Himself in person!'

The Poojari (worshipper) got the 'Darshan' of true saints. He got the benefit of service and worship. He felt himself fulfilled. Thereafter, he used to come to the 'Brahma-Satra' in Rajkot Gurukul for many years. He sent 'Dhotiya' (clothes) for the saints every year. Shree Hari had advised him 'Serve these saints'.

The Poojari observed that command in letter and with spirit for many years.

After fulfilling the wishes of the devotees of the village Kharad, Jogi Swami proceeded further on his pilgrimage. After leaving village Kharad, moving ahead in the Bhal area, Jogi Swami arrived at Dholera.

Dholera means abode of Madan-Mohanji Maharaj and place of penance (*Aaradhana*) of the great ascetic saint Nishkulanand Swami.

In Dholera, Swami did the Darshan of Shree Madan-Mohanji Maharaj, stayed there for some time and again took the path leading to Vadtal. That Poojari (worshipper of village Kharad) was still singing in his heart:

'Bheto Karave Bhagwant no,
Sang Malyo re eva santno'

Meaning: I have come in the contact of such a saint who can lead us to contact the God.

Protection in River

"Sambhal Rakhe Shree Hari, Param Ekantik Sant ni"

Means : Shree Hari takes care of great Saints.

Walking ahead in his pilgrimage, Swami arrived at the bank of river Sabarmati. Swami wanted to cross the river to have the 'Darshan' at Budhej and other memorial places of Shreeji Maharaj and then to reach Vadtal.

There were some boats floating on Sabarmati. There were some huts on the bank. Small shops were there in the huts. People were crossing the river up and down the banks.

Swami said to one boat-man, 'We want to go to the opposite bank, will you take us ?'

The boatman proved to be a devout. He said, "Yes Maharaj! Please wait for a while. I am just coming and will take you to the opposite bank". Saying this the boatman went for some work but here Bhandari Hariprasad Swami became impatient and immediately sat on the boat tied to the bank. As Bhandari Swami sat, Swami also sat in that small boat.

How were those small boats? Instead of an oar, they move with a long bamboo. The boatmen keep long bamboos. They insert the long bamboo to the bottom of the river and move ahead and rotate the rudder left or right to move in the right direction.

Bhandari Swami and Jogi Swami sat in the boat but however, the rope disjoined from the bank and the boat started floating with the stream. Now both the saints did not know how to use oar or bamboo hence they became worried and started remembering Shree Hari. The voice came from the hearts of the saint," Shamla Lejo Sambhal, Hodi meri dariye dube chhe."

The people on the bank started shouting, "O those saints are drowning."

In the meanwhile, one or two persons plunged into the water and swimming swiftly reached the boat and saved the saints.

Years ago, Shree Hari had protected Kaivalyanand Swami in the water of Sabarmati. In the same way Shree Hari again protected these true saints in the River Sabarmati.

Thus going on foot, at last Swami arrived at Vadtal. In Vadtal as if, Shree Harikrishna Maharaj was waiting for Jogi

Swami. Swami took bath in the Lake Gomti, did the 'Darshan' of Shree Harikrishna Maharaj and concluded his pilgrimage on foot at the lotus-feet of Shree Harikrishna Maharaj.

Shree Hari with His own pious hands has done Pratishtha of His own form as a Murti of Shree Harikrishna Maharaj in Vadtal temple. Jogi Swami has profound love for this form. Swami stayed for some days in Vadtal and did the Darshan of all the places attached with the memories of Shreeji Maharaj.

In the meanwhile, Shastriji Maharaj arrived at Vadtal and in the return journey to Rajkot, took both the saints with him in the car and happily arrived at Rajkot.

'Tipanu' is Drowned Away • • •

Pujya Jogi Swami was in Jetpur. Kothari Swami Harikrishnadasji of Jetpur had great affection for Jogi Swami. So he used to bring Jogi Swami to Jetpur frequently.

Once Jogi Swami was sitting near Kothari Swami in Jetpur. At that time, some Haribhaktas (devotees) came from village Tori for 'Darshan'. They asked Kothari Swami, "Swami! When will it rain this year?" In the meanwhile one saint came. The saint was learned 'Purani'. He had good knowledge of Astrology also. Due to bad company and curiosity, he had taken the path of evil accomplishment. Due to bad accomplishment, his nature had become hot-tempered.

Kothari Swami said, 'Purani, see in your Tipanu. (horoscopic table) and tell when the rain will come? The time is now overdue but no signs of rain appear yet."

That saint opened the horoscopic table, started to calculate the planetary positions, and said at last, "Swami! There will be no rain this year. There is no possibility of rain this year. The people will have to face many difficulties."

At that time, Jogi Swami could not remain silent. The great saint can not see the people suffering. Jogi Swami said, "Throw away your 'Tipana'. What can your Tipnu do? You see, there will be rain within two days."

That Tipnawala saint felt insulted and hence, he folded up the horoscopic table and went upstairs.

Kothari Swami said with laughter, "Jogi, you have done a tremendous job. Nobody can say so to him. Today you have caged a serpent. Had anybody else told him, he would have created uproar but due to your strength, he could not speak."

Jogi Swami said, "But Kothari, his 'Tipnu' can not make it rain. That can be done by Maharaj only. Though he is a saint, he has no faith in Maharaj and he is working on the faith of his Tipnu."

Exactly after two days, heavy rain fell in the upper side of Jetpur. Shree Hari made true the words of His beloved saint. Everywhere, there was good rain. That saint realised the divine power of Jogi Swami and gave up his ego. He bowed down at the feet of Jogi Swami and abandoned the other accomplishment and 'Tipna' also on the advice of Jogi Swami.

Remembering this incident, Jogi Swami used to say, "Shastri! See the grace of Maharaj. It was very heavy rain and there was a heavy flood in Bhadar River. His 'Tipna' was washed away in that flood. Where Maharaj showers His kindness, what can Tipna do? What can Kal Bhairav do? 'After saying this Swami told an important and meaningful thing full

of discretion, "Shastri! If Maharaj wishes it can rain and if not, it can't rain also, but how a saint can speak in a way which can make people unhappy?"

Heavy Rainfall

Jogi Swami was moving in Vadiya-Kunkavav area. Swami has great liking for 'Dhoon-Bhajan'. Therefore, he thought to go to Tori and to arrange incessant 'Dhoon' of eight days.

The first rain for sowing had fell but thereafter it was delayed, hence the farmers were worried. The crop sown was likely to be dried up in absence of rain. In the meanwhile, Jogi Swami arrived. All became glad with the Darshan of Jogi Swami. Swami means a support in happiness or sorrow, a place where one can get solace. The worries of the devotees found expression in words. They asked to Swamiji, "Swami, when it will rain? Our crop is being dried up, fodder for cattle is also likely to be exhausted."

Swami said, 'There would be rain but on one condition!'

The devotees said, 'Swami, what is the condition?'

Swami said, 'you will have to chant 'Dhoon' continuously for eight days.'

Devotees said, "O Swami, if rain is to come, we are ready to do Dhoon for ten days. But kindly make it rain,"

Swami said, "See, to rain is in the hands of Maharaj. Let us pray to the Maharaj by chanting 'Dhoon'. You start 'Dhoon' and after three and half a days it will rain but you shall not discontinue 'Dhoon' in between. You are to do 'Dhoon' exactly for seven days.'

The devotees said, "Yes Swami, we will do as you say,"

On the promise of Swamiji, 'Dhoon' started. Satsangis and non-satsangis all joined the 'Dhoon'. All were aware of the strength of Swami. The groups from nearby villages also joined Dhoon. Dhoon was in full swing. Surprisingly exactly after three and half days, a dark cloud could be seen in the Northeast corners in the sky.

One said, 'Swami, a cloud is in the sky.'

Swami said, "Our prayer has reached in the court of Maharaj. That cloud will fulfill your wish,"

In some time, the area of cloud increased and the whole sky was covered. If I say in the words of Swamiji, "Shastri, exactly after three and half days a heavy rain occurred. You see it was due to the grace of Maharaj.'

The devotees started 'Dhoon' loudly and the rain also started heavily.

When it rained, the hearts of farmers could not be controlled but these devotees were of different type. They continued 'Dhoon' for complete seven days with full patience and zeal.

In the conclusion ceremony of 'Dhoon' Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj and the poet Tribhuvan Gaurishankar Vyas were to remain present. They came down at Khijadiya railway station but there was rain all around. How to reach 'Tori' was a problem. The farmers arranged for a cart with two pairs of bullocks and enabled Shastriji to reach Tori.

Gurudev said, "Jogi, you have done a miracle."

Jogi Swami said, "Swami! I cannot. It is done by Maharaj.'

On concluding ceremony, when Aarti was done, a great miracle happened. Big balls of light descended from the sky on the earth and submerged in the well of the temple of women in Tori village. Several people could see this miracle. They came in the temple and told to Shastriji Maharaj.

Shastriji Maharaj asked Jogi Swami, "Jogi, what have you done?"

Jogi Swami said, 'all these devotees have done 'Dhoon' with faith hence the Deities had come for the Darshan,'

With this divine incident, the continuous Dhoon of Tori was concluded. On the day of conclusion of Dhoon, the people of entire Tori village were served fine meal.

Boon For Three Sons

Jogi Swami liked pilgrimage of Kutch very much. Shree Hari was also showering His grace upon the simple hearted and dedicated devotees of Kutch. Shree Hari had travelled in Kutch very much. Therefore Jogi Swami had much liking to go on pilgrimage of Kutch.

The great saints of Kutch have very much love and affection for Jogi Swami. When devouts see oneness and love amongst the great saints, they feel great joy in their hearts. It also nourishes the satsang. Whenever Jogi Swami arrives in Kutch, the elder saints of Bhuj give him respect.

Once Jogi Swami had arrived at Bhuj. Sadguru Mahant Swami and Sadguru Murlimanohardas Swami welcomed him with reverence. When this divine company of these three great saints was sitting in the temple, a devotee Lalji Bhagat from Samatra came for the Darshan.

Lalji Bhagat was a descendant of a family graced by Shree Hari. Once, while moving in the Kutch area, Shree Hari came to the farm of ancestors of Lalji Bhagat. Shree Hari lodged there and took His meal. Shree Hari became very glad to see the love of those devotees and gave them good blessings for seven generations, your lineage will have one son. The surname of Lalji Bhagat's forefathers was Hingola. Lalji Bhagat was the sixth generation in the Hingola family.

However, due to unknown will of Shree Hari, some difficulty arose at the seventh generation. Lalji Bhagat was getting sons but after birth, the same did not survive. Lalji Bhagat was a good devotee but he was not getting the happiness of having a son.

On seeing Lalji Bhagat, the great capable Sadguru Murlimanohardas swami said, 'Lalji, arrange for the pilgrimage of 'Narayan Sarovar' for Jogi Swami. He will give you a son'.

At the behest of Sadguru Murlimanohardasji Swami, Lalji Bhagat arranged for the pilgrimage of Narayan Sarovar for Jogi Swami. After taking Bath in Narayan Sarovar, Jogi Swami gave some water in the hand of Lalji Bhagat and made him to vow for the son.

At the grace of Shree Hari and due to the blessings of Jogi Swami, Lalji Bhagat got a son but he died within one year. Thereafter, Lalji Bhagat had come to Rajkot Gurukul for the Darshan of Jogi Swami. Swami asked him about his well-being. Lalji Bhagat said, 'Swami, due to your blessings I had got a son, but Maharaj took him into Akshardham'. Jogi Swami said, 'Lalji Bhagat do not worry. Do Bhajan, Maharaj will give you three sons. One due to the boon given to your forefathers by Shreeji Maharaj, second due to our prayer and the third one in

excess. Thus, you will get three sons, and all the three will get livelihood here. Do not send them to foreign country. Maharaj will make all of you happy here only.'

Shree Hari had given a boon to Hingola Parivar to have a son up to seventh generation. Instead of that, Shree Hari gave three sons to Lalji Bhagat on the blessings of Jogi Swami. The name of elder is Parbat, second is Ravji and third one is Karshan.

All the three are young and virtuous having a strong faith in Satsang. All the three have studied in Rajkot Gurukul and are very happy. Despite having many chances to go abroad, on the words of Jogi Swami, they are living in this land only.

Maharaj Will Protect Your Millet

Pujya Jogi Swami was moving in the villages of Satsangis continuously. He was arranging Dhoon and was joining the people in chanting Dhoon. Dhoon Means chanting of Holy Names of God.

Once Swami had come to village Galodar and was giving benefit of Dhoon-Kirtan in the temple. On his inspiration, a continuous Dhoon was arranged in the temple. All the Haribhaktas devotees except Aligbhai Vejabhai were taking part in the Dhoon. Aligbhai joined in the Dhoon at night. Swami asked, 'Why don't you come in the Dhoon during day time?'

Aligbhai said, "Swami, during daytime I remain in the field for the protection of millet crop; hence I can't come".

Swami went to the farm of Aligbhai. He moved around the crop of millet and sprinkled sacred water and said, "From today, come for the 'Dhoon' during day time. Your millet crop will ripen without protection'.

Jogi Swami also sprinkled the sacred water on the effigy of *Pitries* (Shura-Pura) and said, 'Go to the Badrikashram and do penance there you will get salvation.' On the words of Jogi Swami, Aligbhai took part in the 'Dhoon' and in his farm, the millet ripened without protection. More millet crop was yielded in comparison to previous years. Aligbhai did Bhajan on the words of Jogi Swami and Shree Hari protected his millet crop. On the words of a great saint, a mutual bond of God and devotee was arranged. The crop of millet was protected in the farm of Aligbhai and the faith in Shree Hari was strengthened in his heart.

Blessing for Water

Eva re Malya jo amane jogiya

Agam agochar jeni vat

Chheda re male nahi Sayar Nirna

Mar hoy Mota Machchni Jat

Meaning: We have got such a saint whose talks are divine and glory unfathomable as the biggest fish can't fathom the entire sea.

Galodar, Maliya Hatina etc. places of Sorath can be considered as fortress of Satsang. This area is sanctified with the footprints of great saints like Gunatitanand Swami and Balmukunddasji Swami.

Jogi Swami used to come to Maliya every now and then. The devotees of this area had got endless love for Jogi Swami. Amongst them, Lilabhai was unique one. Lilabhai was a leading person of Maliya having deep understanding of satsang. He had served many great saints and had received their grace.

Lilabhai had unshakable oneness with Jogi Swami. Once Swami had come to Maliya. Swami wanted to go from Maliya to Galodar. So a vehicle was required to be arranged.

Lilabhai caught that opportunity. He said to Swami, 'Swami, I will bring a car and will take you to Galodar'.

Swami was glad and said, 'Then it is good.'

Lilabhai brought a car and Swami sat in it.

Lilabhai said, "Swami, my residence is situated on our way. I have recently purchased it. Kindly sanctify it with your foot-prints".

Swami said, "Ok"

Swami arrived at the house of Lilabhai. Seeing a big house, Swami became glad and asked, "Lila, at what cost have you purchased this house?"

"Swami, sixty thousand".

Swami said with surprise, "Oh, then you have got it cheap".

Lilabhai said, "Swami, it is due to your grace".

Swami said, "O Lila, you have purchased this house but without water it is useless. Will you not require water?"

Lilabhai knew that Swami has given boon for water to several Haribhaktas at their houses and farms and have made them happy. Lilabhai thought, "I am not to desire such worldly thing from Swami. Such great saints should be heartily kind on us, that is all On thinking so he said' Swami, that will be done. I don't want you to take strain for this."

Swami said, "No, not like that. Go and bring some implement to make a sign. I want to give you water without your demand".

With the inspiration of Shree Hari, Jogi Swami had got a wave of grace in his heart for this faithful devotee. Who could stop him?

Lilabhai brought a pick-axe. With chanting 'Swaminarayan Swaminarayan, Swami made four-five strokes in the compound and said,' arrange for the drilling here and Maharaj will give you water but see that if the village people come to fetch water, allow them gladly. Do not use alone. A river of kindness was flowing in the words of Jogi Swami for the happiness of the people.

On the words of Swamiji, Lilabhai arranged for the drilling at the place shown by Swamiji. It was a land where one cannot get water even at the depth of 200 feet, and here Lilabhai got the water at the depth of 91 feet only.

Now there happened a good thing.

Once we happened to come to Maliya with Jogi Swami. With the insistence of Lilabhai, Jogi Swami arrived at his house. The whole family was happy on the arrival of Jogi Swami.

Swami said, "O saint! see the hand pump in the compound. It is made possible by Shreeji Maharaj, not by me."

Swami remembered that old incident and said, "Shastri! I had come to Maliya. Strong volition occurred in my mind on that day that this Lila is to be given water. I came to the residence of Lilabhai as inspired by Maharaj, drilling was done and much water became available."

"In the meanwhile a famine occurred. Water was not available anywhere in the village except at the hand pump of Lilabhai. Villagers were facing trouble without water. On our words, Lilabhai had provided water to the entire village.

Therefore, the village people became very glad and great affection was developed in their hearts for the Satsang."

"In those days of famine, we happened to come to Maliya. We lodged at the temple, but there was no water in the temple. Therefore, we had to come to the house of Lilabhai for bath. See the kindness of Maharaj, He inspired us to give water to Lilabhai and that water became useful for us."

Grace towards Kalu Bhagat ..

Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, Jogi Swami and some saints stayed in the village Fatsar near Una. Due to the arrival of pious saints a flow of Bhajan, Satsang and discourses started. Daily in the evening, after Aarti, the temple became overcrowded with devotees. During the day also, devotees kept sitting before the saints for Satsang.

One day a little boy came to the temple with other boys of the village. His name was Kalu and by caste, he was Bharwad (a shepherd).

Shastriji Maharaj talked with the children for some time and enquired about their names, addresses etc. As a jeweler recognises a diamond, Swami recognized in the conversation with the children, devout soul of Kalu. Swami saw around in the temple. Jogi Swami was moving Mala sitting in the temple little away. Shastriji Maharaj said, 'Jogi, give initiation (tie a rosary - *Kanthi*) to this boy. He seems to be a good devout soul. Then he told Kalu, "Kalu! go to Jogi Swami". Kalu went to Jogi Swami. Jogi Swami concentrated his sight on Kalu and said, "I am to give initiation to Kalu and also to give him Pooja." Saying this, Jogi Swami tied a 'Kanthi' around his neck, and gave him five vows to observe. In the meanwhile, a younger saint came

with a box of 'Pooja'. Swami explained to him how to do 'Pooja' in the morning, after taking bath and gave him the Pooja-box. With joy, Kalu accepted it.

Kalu was a little boy. He was a devout soul of previous birth. With the Darshan of Jogi Swami, his mind was stuck in him. The talks of Swamiji touched his inner heart. With the Darshan of such a pious saint, he felt extreme joy. On receiving 'Pooja' at the hands of Jogi Swami, he felt great joy as if he had received God Himself in person. A minor boy Kalu started to perform 'Pooja' after taking bath with joy and enthusiasm as he was explained by Jogi Swami.

Jogi Swami taught him Aarti and some verses of Kirtans. An illiterate Kalu, with full faith, started learning by memorising the same. Thereafter Kalu used to come to the temple daily at night and started doing Aarti, prayer and 'Dhoon'. At night on seeing the Haribhaktas and the saints chanting 'Niyam-chesta', Kalu wished to chant those verses but as he did not know these, he felt agitated.

Once Jogi Swami was moving Mala at night. At that time Kalu said, "Swami! please teach me how to chant 'Niyam-chesta'."

Swami said, 'OK, come at night.'

As per the advice, Kalu started coming to the temple at night. After conclusion of the evening Satsang assembly, Kalu sat before Swami. Swami taught him the verses. First Swami sang a stanza, then Kalu repeated it. This way Kalu memorised the verses of 'Niyam-Cheshta'

In the caste of Bharvads, the spread of education is meager. Therefore, Kalu Bhagat could not get opportunity to go to school. Hence, he was unable to read or write. Yet on the advice of Jogi Swami, the saints taught him 'Kirtans'.

In the meantime, due to some occasional work, Ramjibhai Thumar of Taravada had to come to Fatsar. He came to know that Swami was in the temple, therefore he came for the 'Darshan'.

Jogi Swami said, "O Ramji! You may teach this Kalu to read and to write".

On the command of Swami, Ramjibhai started to teach Kalu the alphabets and '*Barakshari*' of Gujarati language. Kalu also developed reverence towards Ramjibhai and he started learning with enthusiasm.

After some days, Ramjibhai went back to Taravada. He wrote a letter to Kalu from Taravada. Kalu became very glad to receive the letter, but experienced difficulty in reading it. He requested someone to read it and then only he could know that the letter was from Ramjibhai Thumar. He had advised him to continue his study.

Kalu Wrote a Letter...

Kalu also thought to write a letter to Ramjibhai but still he did not know much to write. Thinking in this way, Kalu went to the jungle to graze the cattle.

At last, he sat under a tree and by remembering Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan and Jogi Swami; started praying to the God. His heart was filled with emotion. He thought, "I will not be able to write any reply to my friend". As he was thinking in this way, he had some intuition. Therefore, he took a paper and a pencil and started writing. He wrote a letter as under, in the style of singing of Bhakta Chintamani.

Raga : Purva-Chhayo

Kagal Lakhva Hari Krushnaji, Karu Ichchha Manma Jarur
 Patra Lakhvo Premthi, Swami Sahajanand Hajur,
 Krupa Hoy Hari Krushnani, To Prem no Patra Lakhay
 Marji Na hoy Nathani, To Tarnu Nav Today
 Sadguru Swami Tanu Janam Bhomnu Gam
 Dharmbandhu Tya Rahe, Shubh Ramjibhai chhe Nam

Raga : Chopai

Dharmabandhu suno Ramjibhay re,
 Mare Haide Harakh Na may re,
 Pragat Patra Tamaro Malyore,
 Vanchi Anand No ogha Valyo re
 Patra Vanchi Raji Thaya Amere,
 Bahu Viveke Lakhyo Chhe Tame re
 Ghana Sneh Thi Sau ne Sambhari re,
 Tame Vigat Lakhi chhe Sari re,
 Eva Bandhu Kem Bhulay re,
 Kem Ramjibhai Visaray re!
 Nana Mota Sau ne Sambhari re,
 Bahu Vigat Lakhi chhe sari re

Thus, Kalu wrote a letter to his friend with love. At that time, he was only 11 years old. With the help of saints, he had memorised the chapter of Bhakt-Chintamani. Therefore, he wrote a letter in the tune of that Raga in poetry. The person who did not know how to write in prose, he thus wrote a letter in poetry. It can be considered as direct result of grace and blessing of Shree Hari and the saints.

The Lion had to Flee

As the crop slowly grows with the rainfall, in the same way, with the grace of a great saint, the love towards Shree Hari increased in his heart and the boy became known as 'Kalu Bhagat'

Kalu Bhagat used to go to the Jungle to graze the cattle of the villagers. In the hilly area of Gir, deep rivulets and small streams flow. In this land of great ascetics and saints, River Machchhundri flows. In this green land, Kalu Bhagat grazed the cattle. He used to sing the Kirtans memorized by him. He kept watch on the cattle grazing around.

Once in an afternoon, the birds were chirping. The shepherds were playing flutes. In the meanwhile, the cows started running bellowing in fear. As Kalu Bhagat used to move in the Jungle from his childhood, he immediately understood that a lion had come. At that time, he saw a lion attacking a small cow. Bhagat immediately ran towards the Lion taking a long and strong Lathi in his hand, to save the cow. With a great roar, he gave a powerful stroke of his Lathi on the head of the lion. The lion became angry and leaving aside that cow, rushed with a roar toward Bhagat. Again, Bhagat raised his Lathi with iron rings and again challenged the lion. The lion stopped short. Both were standing in front of each other, testing the courage. Bhagat immediately understood that it is a danger to his life. He remembered Shree Hari and Jogi Swami. Nobody knows what happened, the Lion went away in the Jungle.

Kalu Bhagat came to the temple in the evening. After doing Darshan of the Bhagawan, he sat before Jogi Swami. In the meanwhile, as if knowing about the incident, Jogi Swami

asked, "O Bhagat, what has happened to you in the Jungle today?"

Kalu Bhagat said, "Swami, big surprise happened today. A lion caught a cow, I rushed with my 'Dang' (a long and strong stick with iron rings at the end) to the lion. With a shout, I gave a powerful stroke of my 'Dang' on the head of the lion. The roaring lion retreated some steps. I also stood raising my Dang. The lion remained standing before me. Seeing death, I remembered Maharaj and you. Thereafter, however, the lion went away."

On hearing this, Swami said, "Kalu, now you are not to go for grazing the cattle of the village. You may go to work in the field of any farmer. Bhagat said, 'Swami, being a 'Bharvad' (Shepherd) I do not know how to work in the field. Who will keep me as a labourer?'

Swami said, "Slowly you will learn everything. I will recommend to a good devotee. He will give you job as labourer. See the shower of grace by a great saint on a small but deserving devotee!

Swami recommended to Vallabhbhai Dhanani of Fatsar, "you may employ Kalu Bhagat to work in your field.'

Vallabhbapa had great faith in Jogi Swami, hence he said, 'Ok Swami, I will do as you wish.'

Vallabhbapa entrusted the work of his field to Kalu Bhagat. Kalu Bhagat started to work with zeal. He was highly industrious. As Bhagat was working faithfully, he was loved by all.

Thus, the house-hold and social dealings of Kalu Bhagat were going well. At the same time, he was also busy with Bhajan - Smaran very well.

Fever Had gone for Ever

Once in a hot summer, in the month of Vaishakha, Kalu Bhagat was toiling very hard and he got severe fever. He was unable to bear it. He became unable to work and came to the temple.

Temple means a residence of Bhagat. With the grace of elder saints, he had got great support in his young age, the support of Shree Hari Himself. Bhagat had firmly installed that support in his heart. Bhagat came to the temple from the field. In the Verandah of the temple, near the small temples of Hanumanji and Ganapatiji, he went to sleep, as a child sleeps on the lap of his mother.

At that time, Purani Swami Premprakashdasji had come to Fatsar. As Muktanand Swami is considered as the mother of Satsang, Purani Swami can be considered as the mother of entire Gurukul family.

Purani Swami Premprakashdasji means an ocean of love.

Purani Swami means a clean, frank and desireless saint.

Purani Swami means motherly love embodied.

The students, who have been brought up under the kind shelter of Purani Swami, are unable to forget him. If I say particularly about us. if we had not got the kind shelter of Purani Swami and Jogi Swami, perhaps we would not have become saints.

It was very hot summer. The Sun was roasting the earth. It was noon. There was no wind at all, not even a gentle breeze. The tail of the flag on the temple and the leaves of the trees were stable. The streets of the village were totally empty. The birds had hidden themselves under the shelter of leaves.

Purani Swami and the saints, after taking their meal, were taking rest in the temple. At 3:30 at noon, as it was time to wake up the God, the saints woke up. The gates of the temple were opened up. A younger saint came to wake up Hanumanji and Ganapatiji. He saw Kalu Bhagat sleeping nearby.

The saint told Bhagat to wake up but he did not. The saint thought, ' what has happened to Bhagat today? Why is he not waking up? He touched the body of Bhagat. It was very hot with fever. The younger saint immediately told Purani Swami', "Kalu Bhagat is sleeping in the Verandah and he has a severe fever."

Purani Swami immediately came out. He sat near Bhagat. He took Bhagat's hand in his hand to examine the vein and knew that Bhagat had a severe fever.

Purani Swami with kindness said to the younger saint, "Sadhuram, go and bring a water-pot (*Kalash*) filled with water and also bring fruits served to the God".

Younger saint brought water in a water-pot and also fruit served to the God. Purani Swami stood up and he served the water to Hanumanji and prayed "O Kashta-bhanjan Dev! Please remove the fever of this servant of you".

Purani Swami made Kalu to drink the water served to Hanumanji and also gave fruits. He said to other saint, "Bring water in a pot and add sufficient salt in it. We want to put wet piece of cloth on the forehead of Bhagat." The younger saint brought all these and Swami himself started putting wet piece of cloth on the head of Bhagat.

Slowly, the heat of fever in the body of Bhagat was removed and he felt good.

Many years have elapsed. Kalu Bhagat, remembering this incident, says even today, ' Swami, I had fever and had become unconscious. On the blissful touch of Purani Swami, I became conscious. Purani Swami made me to drink the water. He put wet piece of cloth on my head and said, "Bhagat, you may go, now Hanumanji will remove your fever. From that day, I have never suffered from fever. My fever is removed forever. I have never taken any medicines".

If great saints shower kindness, it can remove the disease of birth and death, then what can fever do?

"Kalu ! Buy Buffaloes"

On the words of Jogi Swami, Kalu Bhagat continued to do farm labour. Time was passing away. In the meantime, Jogi Swami again came to Fatsar.

It was S.Y. 1969. It was summer. The village people became very glad on arrival of Jogi Swami. The devotees flocked together in the temple to have the Darshan of this great saint. Kalu Bhagat also rushed to the temple.

At night, as usual, the evening Aarti, Dhoon-Bhajan, discourses were held. The verses of Niyam-Chesta were sung. Kalu Bhagat also took part in all these daily routine along with Jogi Swami and other saints. The routine programme of evening was over. The devotees left the temple. Kalu Bhagat came near Swami and sat nearby. On seeing this humble devotee, Jogi Swami had a wave of kindness towards Kalu Bhagat. Swami said, "O Kalu! For how many years will you maintain your family on such type of labour? You may keep buffaloes and deal in milk and curds".

Kalu Bhagat said, "Swami, I have no money. Who will give me buffaloes without money?"

Swami said, "You can tell somebody. Maharaj will help you, by inspiring him".

Kalu Bhagat said, "But Swami, in our family, dominance is of Bhurabapa, my father's elder brother. Everything is being done as per his wish only. He will not allow me to keep buffaloes".

Swami asked, "Why? What objection has he?"

Kalu Bhagat said, "Swami, I observe the rules of Satsang, he dislikes it".

Swami said, "Don't worry; you may talk to him at home. Maharaj will clear your way. But ensure to keep buffaloes only and not goats, because one will have to send them to slaughterhouse at last and that is a sin." In the advice of Jogi Swami, the good of the devotee and kindness towards all the living beings could be seen.

For Kalu Bhagat, order or advice of Jogi Swami means command of God Himself. Therefore, he decided to keep buffaloes, with or without permission of Bhurabapa.

On the words of Jogi Swami, Kalu Bhagat was working with Vallabhapa Dhanani. In the summer season, the farmers of the villages around Gir used to bring manure from the *Nesdas* in the Gir, and mix it up into their fields. Kalu Bhagat was going with the truck to the Gir forest daily in the early morning at the place known as Kalubhai's *Tali* to bring manure. Years ago there had been an outlaw namely Kalubhai. He was killed at a place in the Gir, hence later on that place became known as Kalubhai's *Tali*.

Today while loading the truck with manure, Bhagat told his co-workers, "As advised by Swami, I want to keep buffaloes.' The co-workers had very good feeling for Bhagat, hence all gladly supported the idea.' It will be very good, if you keep the buffaloes."

These people knew that when it was advised by Swamiji, Bhagat would surely keep buffaloes.

Thus, they were talking while loading the truck with manure. In the meantime, the shepherds from *Shiv-valo Aaro* (name of a place in Jungle) came to graze the cattle there. One of them was Haribhai Karetha who was a distant relative of Kalu Bhagat.

Kalu Bhagat told Haribhai, "I want to purchase buffaloes. Do you want to sell?"

Haribhai said, "Bhagat, what do you say! For your seven generations, no one had buffaloes, forget that idea."

The core of the matter was that in the sub-caste of Bhagat's family, it was a belief that they are not to keep buffaloes; otherwise, they would be plunged into the burden of heavy debt. Due to this type of strong belief, the shepherds of sub-caste of Bhagat did not keep buffaloes.

The friends of Bhagat said, "Haribhai, do not talk about other things, Bhagat has been told to keep buffaloes by his Guru, hence he will purchase buffaloes anyhow. If you want to sell, say yes, otherwise Bhagat will purchase from others."

Haribhai said, "Bhagat, I want to sell buffaloes but how will you arrange for money?"

Bhagat said, "See, I am only a labour hence at present I have no money. But I will continue to pay from the profit earned

from the buffaloes. Within two-three years I will repay completely."

Haribhai said, "Bhagat, I have no objection to your idea but you will have to give a guarantor. If somebody from your family becomes the guarantor, I am ready to give you buffaloes on credit."

Bhagat said, "Ok, I will come after arranging for the guarantor."

Haribhai said, "Ok then I will gladly give you buffaloes"

After loading the manure into the truck, Bhagat came home. It was evening. Bhagat was in a hurry to reach to the temple. Whatever may be the difficulty, Bhagat would never miss to go to the temple.

Before going to the temple, with courage he told his elder Bhurabapa, "I want to purchase buffaloes, but I have no money. I am to purchase on credit. Will you become my guarantor?"

Bhurabapa was stunned to hear it. He saw Kalu Bhagat with his wide-open eyes. Kalu Bhagat was keeping Satsang and that was not at all liked by Bhurabapa. It was unbearable for him. Then how could he agree to become a guarantor?

Bhurabapa immediately scolded, "Bhagat! Have you become mad? In our family lineage, none has ever kept buffaloes. How you can have this bad idea to keep buffaloes! You cannot be prosperous by keeping buffaloes. The buffalo keeper could be plunged into heavy debt and be ruined."

Bhagat said, "You see, my Guru has told me to keep buffaloes, therefore I ought to keep buffaloes. Whether to become guarantor or not, is for you to think over."

Bhurabapa saw that today Kalu's attitude was different. Now he will not succumb in straight way. Bapa played a trick, "Kalu, leave the idea to keep buffaloes, instead you may keep goats. It will not be a matter to worry. If you want to keep you can keep, when you don't want, you can sell them." Bapa thought that this Bhagat would get nothing by keeping goats.

On the other hand, Bhagat was firm. He said, "Bapa I don't want to keep goats. My Guru has told me to keep buffaloes and he has clearly said not to keep goats. If you will not become a guarantor, I will make my father-in-law to become a guarantor. Then you will not blame me. I am going to the temple and returning after some time. In the meanwhile, you may think over. If you are willing to be a guarantor, then be ready to come with me in the morning with the truck, otherwise I will manage."

After saying this, Bhagat went to the temple. In every word of Bhagat, there was a sound of truth and firm decision.

Bapa understood the situation. Now Kalu is a different man. Now he cannot be convinced. Anyhow, he will make his father-in-law a guarantor and will surely purchase buffaloes. Bhurabapa was very wise. He thought out a trick. I will go with him to become guarantor and will palm off old and weak buffaloes to Bhagat. Then he will be toiling for whole of his life and will sink himself in the debt. Thus, he chalked out a plot.

The name of Kalu Bhagat's father was Danabhai. Danabhai was a very kind, polite and innocent person, hence Bhurabapa had become dominant in the family. Bhurabapa, with a vicious design in his mind, told Danabhai, "Dana, this Kalu has become the disciple of Swaminarayan Sampraday. He is instigated by his Swami. He is not taking into consideration our opinion. By keeping buffaloes, he will ruin our family, but I

do not want to create any quarrel. I will go with him to purchase buffaloes”.

Danabhai was glad to hear him. He thought, “At last he came to the line.” But he could not think of the evil design of Bhura bapa.

Kalu Bhagat came home late in the night. Mentally, he was prepared to hear harsh words of Bhurabapa. But come what may, he was very firm in his determination to purchase buffaloes and not to go back on that decision. He was determined to do as per the words of Jogi Swami. On seeing Kalu Bhagat, Bhurabapa said, “You have become much displeased. I have decided to come with you to become a guarantor. Tell when to go.”

Kalu Bhagat could not believe such a change in Bapa. How could he know about the malicious design of Bhurabapa? “Maharaj will do well,” these words of Jogi Swami were sounding in his heart.

Kalu Bhagat said, “In the early morning, a truck is going to fetch manure. We are to go with it.”

Bhura Bapa said, “Ok! Now you may go to sleep without any worry. We will go together in the morning.”

Bhagat was unable to understand the unbelievable change in Bhurabapa. But he surely knew that Bhurabapa was very skilful and shrewd.

Bhagat thought, “Whether Bhurabapa truly says to come with me or he is fooling me, whatever it is, will be known in the morning.”

He stopped thinking and went to sleep.

In the early morning, Bhurabapa was really ready to come with him. After loading the truck with manure, he and Bhurabapa came at Shivtali at the residence of Haribhai Karetha.

Haribhai welcomed both. Bhurabapa was humourous and outspoken by nature. Moreover, Haribhai was in-laws in relation.

Hence Bapa asked him, “O Hari, show me your buffaloes. My Kalu wants to buy buffalos. You have told about a gurantor, therefore I have come to become a guarantor.”

Haribhai said, “Ok Bapa, come with me, the buffaloes would be sitting near river at this time.”

Bapa said, “But how are the buffaloes? Whether useful or useless? Means, whether they are young or old? Whether the buffaloes are capable to give milk?”

Haribhai said, “Bapa, whatever may be, I will give you best buffaloes”. Talking in this way they came to the river.

The buffaloes were grazing at the bank of the river. Few were sitting in the water and few were under tree. Haribhai showed them three of the best buffaloes. The names of the buffaloes were Dhingal, Sogal and Ladak.

As someone gives names to his sons, the cattle keepers also give names to their buffaloes. Bhagat liked those three buffaloes.

Bhurabapa thought that these buffaloes are very good. Not of the class, I have thought out to give Bhagat. Thinking so he asked, “What is the price?”

Haribhai said, “you see, these buffaloes are very dear to me. As I have to spend on social custom, I am compelled by the circumstances to sell them. There will be Rs 500/- per buffalo. As you are my relative, I am asking less.”

Bhurabapa slowly and skillfully said, “O Haribhai! My Kalu is a farm laborer. This price is too high for him. Show us buffaloes of lesser price! Kalu wants to purchase three buffaloes,

hence how can he manage for this much of money? Moreover, I also cannot be guarantor for such a big amount!"

Haribhai said, "Bhurabapa, do not be greedy. If you purchase cheap, you will not get good buffaloes."

Bhurabapa said, "But we have to manage for the money. You may show cheap buffaloes".

Haribhai showed another three. All were old, namely Fachar, Gadad and Manek.

While talking with Haribhai, Bhurabapa examined the buffaloes. All were old. Bhurabapa was glad. These buffaloes are good for this devotee.

Bhurabapa said, "Hari, talk about price."

Kalu Bhagat thought that these buffaloes are useless but due to bashfulness, he could not speak even a word. Still he was respecting the elder of his family.

Haribhai said, "It will cost Rs. 300/- per buffalo."

Bhurabapa got the thing he was planning. He said, "Ok, agreed."

Now Kalu Bhagat had a spark in his mind. Bapa does not wish to purchase good buffaloes for me. He wants me to have such old buffaloes to ruin me.

Now Kalu Bhagat could understand secret of the change in the attitude of Bhurabapa.

Haribhai said, "Bapa, do not be greedy. You will repent. As you are my relatives, I am telling you the truth. Purchase good buffaloes."

But Bhurabapa declined.

Bapa said, "But my Kalu is doing hard work, he should afford the price".

Kalu Bhagat now fully understood the malice of Bhurabapa but the words of Jogi Swami 'Maharaj will do well' were sounding in his mind. Bhagat did not speak anything. 'Let it be as wish of Maharaj. My God will always do well for me.'

Haribhai was thinking, "Bapa is greedy."

Bhurabapa was thinking that his plot has succeeded.

Bhagat was thinking, "Let it be as Maharaj wish."

Thus after setting the bargain all the three came to the Shivtali Nes. The wife of Haribhai was waiting for the guests.

As all the three returned, she asked, "What have you done? Is bargain settled with Bhagat?"

Haribhai said, "Yes, with the grace of the God, good bargain is done. Three buffaloes are sold".

His wife asked, "Which three are given to Bhagat?"

Haribhai said, "Fachar, Gadad and Manek."

On hearing the names, she was surprised. A voice came out from her heart, "Oh! Those are old buffaloes, not much useful. We should not give to Bhagat. Such old buffaloes, It is a sin".

Thinking this way, she said, "Oh my man, you have given old buffaloes to Bhagat and yet you say it is a good bargain? Do you want to commit a sin by giving such old buffaloes to Bhagat?"

All were hearing. A voice sounded from the heart of Kalu Bhagat. It is not Haribhai's wife speaking, my God Shree Hari is speaking' from her heart.

Haribhai said, "But I was giving only good buffaloes to Bhagat but Bhurabapa is greedy. Though I said no, he himself chose these buffaloes. Then what could I do?"

Bhura Bapa wanted to speak something but that woman did not allow him. "Bapa, you are our respected person. I beg your pardon, but I don't want to give such useless buffaloes to Bhagat."

Bhura Bapa said, "But good buffaloes are costly and Kalu is unable to pay and I am to be a guarantor."

The wife of Haribhai said, 'Bapa, forget about money. Bhagat can give us money after three years and we do not need your guarantee. The word of Bhagat is a guarantee for us. Therefore, please don't speak anything now.' She said to Haribhai, "See, three buffaloes selected at first instance, Dhingal, Sogal and Ladak only be given to Bhagat, no others".

There was a great force in her words. None could speak otherwise. Bhurabapa became dumb. His face lost its colours. This woman had failed his plan.

Kalu Bhagat got tears of pleasure in his eyes. He thought that at last my God has done well to me.

On the words of Swami, good bargain was settled. Shree Hari helped Bhagat unexpectedly. Bhura Bapa's game was collapsed. Bhagat came home with good buffaloes.

At the grace of Shree Hari, a good bargain of three buffaloes was settled. One buffalo was given to Bhagat by his maternal uncle Jasabhai who said, "Bhagat, I have no hurry. You may give money even after ten years, don't worry."

Haribhai Jagani was a good devotee. He gave one buffalo to Bhagat and said, "Bhagat, I don't want money. You may give me fertilizer." Bhagat said, "Ok."

Swami had said, "Living in somebody, Maharaj will help you" Thus, on the words of Jogi Swami, he received unexpected help from many."

Taking all the five buffaloes, Bhagat went to Khakharawala Nes. Here lived his maternal uncle's son. He helped Bhagat a lot. Bhagat had savings of three hundred rupees. He purchased household grocery and cottonseeds for the buffaloes, sufficient for four months.

It was good rainfall that year. Bhagat carefully kept buffaloes, as a result five buffaloes gave return equivalent to ten buffaloes, within five months. In five months only, he sold ghee of 1600 Rupees. He repaid the debt to Haribhai Shivtaliwala within one year only instead of three years.

At the completion of rainy season, the number of buffaloes rose to seven. Wealth increased in the house. At the grace of Shree Hari and Jogi Swami, Kalu Bhagat's business increased. The people had faith in Bhagat. Bhagat sold only pure milk and ghee without any adulteration. Hence people purchased milk and ghee from Bhagat only.

Really, Kalu Bhagat is a different kind of human being. For material benefit, he has never violated the commands of Shree Hari. He has never touched the unlawful money. He is from a lower caste but his wealth of heart is bigger than that of big rulers.

In the year of 1971, Bhagat came to Kanek Nes for living there. Slowly the number of buffaloes rose from 7 to 70. On the words of Jogi Swami, he achieved good success in keeping the buffaloes.

Good days are here again

Sometimes Bhagat lived with buffaloes at Khakhra Nes, sometimes in Fatsar. He had not gone to Kanek Nes yet. This story is from that time. All were happy to see Bhagat's progress except Bhurabapa like Mama Shakuni, he was envious of Bhagat and was harassing Bhagat in many ways.

Straightforward and simple natured Bhagat was forbearing with silence. Bhagat's father Danabhai was also taking sides with Bhurabapa. Danabhai also told Bhagat, "Kalu, your satsang is true but I can't forsake my brother."

Only mother of Kalubhai supported him. All other family members were against Kalubhagat, and Bhurapaba was their leader. He mixed onion and garlic in the food and water sometimes. Bhurabapa used to hide Bhagat's Pooja. Every now and then, on finding some fault, he used to scold Bhagat. Thus, Bhurabapa harassed Bhagat in many ways but Kalu Bhagat was endured all these, believing it as the wish of Maharaj.

Bhagat endured all these, but Shree Hari could not bear it. One day at night, Shree Hari showed him a miracle and Bhurabapa was compelled to leave his malicious nature.

It was morning. Kalu Bhagat has just completed his Pooja. At that time Bhurabapa came. He was shivering. He sat little away on his knees, keeping his hands on his head, and looking towards Kalu Bhagat.

Kalu Bhagat looked at Bhura Bapa. Seeing the face of Bapa, he could understand that something new had happened. Bapa was pale and somewhat depressed.

As Kalu Bhagat looked at him, Bapa said, "O Kalu! Does your Swaminarayan sit on a horse?"

Bhagat thought, "Why is Bapa asking such a question?"

Bhagat said, "Yes, our Swaminarayan Bhagawan does sit on a horse".

Bhura Bapa asked, "How is that mare?"

Bhagat said, "Her colour is red and a white spot on her forehead."

Bapa said, "Yes, exactly it is. Kalu! who would be with him, having turbans on their heads and spears and swords in their hands?"

Bhagat said, "They are called their *Palas* (Body guards)."

Bhagat thought, "What is Bapa asking today? I can't understand."

Bapa said, "O Kalu! At night, your Swami came on the horse. With him there were men with 'Bokani' (a piece of cloth tied around the face) and turban on the head. They had spears and swords in their hands. They beat me very much and threw me from my bed. Your Swami was standing a little away. He said, O Bhuriya! If you harass my devotee henceforth, you will not remain safe. I bowed down to him and promised not to harass you henceforth. Then only, he let me go alive. Kalu, now onward if I harass you, I will be your son."

Kalu Bhagat could understand the matter now. He thought, with the grace of Jogi Swami, Maharaj is taking care of me!

After this incident the harassment caused by Bhura Bapa totally stopped. Thereafter Bhagat went to Kanek Nes to live there and became happy.

“Kalu ! Start a Shop”

Again, one day Swami said, “O Kalu, now you have many buffaloes, haven’t you?”

Bhagat said, “Yes Swami, with your grace, I have now eighty buffaloes”

Swami said, “Kalu, start a shop in Gir Gadhada now.”

Bhagat said, “But Swami, will I be able to do business?”

Swami said, “Yes, you will be able to do good business. Maharaj is with you.”

On the words of Jogi Swami, Bhagat started a shop in Gir Gadhada. The reputation and credit was good, hence good business was done by him. With the grace of Swami, he became very happy. At present, his son is studying in Ahmedabad Gurukul and two others are keeping the buffaloes.

Buffaloes Saved Bhagat

Hardam Rahe Smaranma, Shree Hari ne sant

Sankat ma kem visare, Bhagat ne Bhagwant

Meaning: Who always remembers Shree Hari and His Saints, Shree Hari never forgets that disciple in danger.

The land of Gir in Saurashtra is really like a piece of heaven. It is a favourite land of lions and saints. It is a motherland of valiant men like lions. In this land of Gir, the beauty of the bank of the River Machchhundri is unique. As it was loved by Matsyendranath, it is named as Machchhundri. Flowing zigzag like a serpent, it is like a necklace of Gir.

Several saints have done penance here on the banks of this river and have made it like a place of pilgrimage. Its water is more than the nectar and it is a lifeline for the Maldharis (shepherds) and their cattle living in Gir.

Once on the bank of this river, Kalu Bhagat was grazing his buffaloes. It was evening. The sun was moving fast towards the horizon in the west and with its golden rays, that whole Gir looked beautiful.

The flow of Machchhundri was creating the sound like playing of flute by Shree Krishna. The buffaloes of Bhagat were grazing green grass and were slowly advancing towards the Nes. At that time in the nearby bushes, a lion and a lioness were engaged in the play.

As such, lion is an animal of high pedigree. If it is not harassed by man, it never attacks. All the kinds of animals except human being are living as per the rules of the nature. If it feels itself endangered, then only it will attack, otherwise not. Only human being is such, which harasses others without any reason.

The lion is the king of animals. Its living style is royal and marvelous. The people living in the jungle know about its nature very well. The lion does not harass human being and the people of Gir do not fear the lion. Both respect each other. Of course, the nature of the lioness is hot. One must stay away from her. If a lioness is in the mating period or her cubs are with her, then she is dangerous.

While grazing the buffaloes, Bhagat unknowingly went to the place where the lion couple was playing. On seeing Bhagat, the lion became angry and rushed towards Bhagat. Bhagat became alert. Bhagat and the lion came opposite each other. Bhagat’s clothes became wet with the foam came out of

the mouth of the lion. But this was Kalu Bhagat, not an ordinary man. He was fearless. Bhagat also shouted against the lion and raised his 'Dang,' but he thought whatever could happen today. He remembered Maharaj and Jogi Swami. The whole forest became stunned. The sun in the sky also stopped for a while. The birds sitting on the trees around started chirping in fear. The monkeys also started jumping from one tree to another. The crowd of deer started running away to save themselves. In the meantime, Bhagat's favourite buffalo 'Manek' got the smell of a lion. She saw her master in danger. She immediately attacked the lion. Other buffaloes also made all out attack on the lion. Manek attacked with her head and horns and made the lion to flee. Thus, the buffaloes of Bhagat saved him.

As such, the buffalo is a heavy and thick-skinned animal, which do not move if one strikes with a lathi. Anyhow, the buffaloes of Gir do not fear the lions at all.

The cows are considered to be clever and active but on seeing the lion they start running away and scatter. They fall prey to lion in such a panic. However, the buffaloes of Gir are different. When these buffaloes see a lion, they become valiant and united they break the bones of the lion. The lion is also aware of the strength of the buffaloes hence it always remains away from the herd of buffaloes. Of course, if any younger buffalo were found alone, the lion would not leave it alive. Moreover, when buffaloes are with him, the Maldhari (Shepherd) also does not fear the lions.

It appears that the people of India need to learn some lesson from the buffaloes. The people run away by the fear of terrorists like cows and resultantly are killed like small creatures. Instead the people of India should united and fearlessly fight terrorism.

Once, Kalu Bhagat came to Rajkot for the Darshan of Jogi Swami. He told Jogi Swami in detail how Maharaj had saved him by inspiring the buffaloes.

Swami said, 'Bhagat, the lion would have killed you but you are doing devotion of the Maharaj, hence He has saved you. You continue to do Bhajan. If we become true devotee of the God, then as Gunatitanand Swami has said 'As mother saves her child, eyelid saves eye, the God is there to save us.'

At the Pit of Bhaduri • • •

Bhagawan Shree Hari asked Muktanand Swami, 'Swami, do you know how to solder the broken *Tumbadi* (a vessel of dry rind)?'

Swami said, 'No Maharaj.'

Shree Hari said, 'Swami, you do not know your divine power! If you cast your eye on a soul like a fly, it would become like a sun. You have such a power.'

Swami said, 'Maharaj, it is not due to me, but due to your power'.

Such is the story of Jogi Swami. Jogi Swami, who always keeps Shree Hari in his heart, graced upon a soul like Kalu Bhagat and changed him entirely.

Nobody takes note of a fly but everybody has to take a note of the Sun. Swami cast his kind eye on a shepherd of a Nes of Gir and made him notable for all. The God has made Kalu Bhagat a benevolent as well as brave devotee. He has no fear at all in his life.

One day, in the early morning, the sun had yet not came out of the eastern horizon. The previous day Kalu Bhagat had

gone from Kanek Nes to Girgadhada for some domestic work. In the evening, while returning to Kanek, he was late. He was on the way to Kanek and night had fallen, hence he stopped his journey in the forest near Kodiya dam. He went to sleep remembering Shreeji Maharaj. As he was much tired, he got, sound sleep. Thus in the midst of the jungle, in the home of Lions only Kalu Bhagat can sleep. None else can.

Bhagat rose up in the early morning and came at the ditch of Bhaduri of River Machchhundri. The ditch of Bhaduri is a resting place of Maladharis where water never exhausts. It is also a place of rest for the lions. In the bushes around, the lions gladly sleep.

The water of Machchhundri was flowing with sweet sound. As such, Kalu Bhagat came for the bath and Pooja-Path at the bank of the Machchhundri.

Today Bhagat took his bath in the clean water of Bhaduri ditch. On the clean sands of the bank, he sat to do his Pooja-Path. At that time, a big lion came on the opposite bank to drink water.

Bhagat saw the lion and lion also saw Bhagat. Both gazed at each other but Bhagat is a sea of courage. He had no fear.

Bhagat thought, 'The protector Shree Hari with a thousand hands is with me, then why fear?' Thinking in this way, he engrossed his mind in Shree Hari and started moving Mala.

The lion drank the water and after crossing the river, advanced towards Bhagat. However, Bhagat remained unmoved and continued to move Mala. The lion, like a pet animal sat at some distance. He gazed at Bhagat, as if a devout soul of previous birth had come for the Darshan of a true devotee of the God.

Bhagat continued to move Mala and the lion also continued to sit before him. When Bhagat concluded his 'Pooja', the lion also took leave and disappeared in the dense forest. What a courage of Kalu Bhagat! To keep courage in such a situation is a result of a grace of Shree Hari and a great saint.

Sincere Desire

Kalu Bhagat had volition in his mind. As most of the saints of Gurukul had visited his Nes, but 'Guru' Jogi Swami had never come. It would be good, if Swami come to my Nes but looking to the old age of Swami and hilly road of Gir, how can I insist?

Once, when Jogi Swami was in Ahmedabad Gurukul, Kalu Bhagat came there for the Darshan. He was thinking to do Pratishta of pictorial Murtis of Shree Hari and Gopinathji Maharaj in a small temple at home by doing Aarti by Jogi Swami.

Bhagat told Vishwavihari Swami. Vishwavihari Swami asked Jogi Swami, "Swami, Bhagat wants to create a small temple in the Nes. Will you do Aarti of Murtis here or will you go to the Nes?"

As if to fulfill the wish of Bhagat, Shree Hari inspired Swami. Swami said, "We will go to the Nes of Bhagat to create a temple there."

On hearing this, Bhagat became very glad. Bhagat told Balkrishnadasji Swami that Jogi Swami was to come to Kanek. Bal Swami said that they would also come with him.

Bal Swami sent some students with Kalu Bhagat to Kanek for prior arrangements.

Loving Temple of Nes

A Nes (small cluster of Huts of Shepherds in the Gir forest) is worth seeing.

The walls are made of vertical and horizontal logs of wood and the roofs are made of dry grass. The cluster of such huts is called a Nes. In the rural Gujarati tongue, it is called 'Nehdo'. 'Nehdo' means the residence of people whose hearts are full of pure love. The cold wind of winter blows through such huts, the heat of summer heats up in and out of these huts and the rain wets these huts in and out.

In such a hut, a wealthy man could not live even for a week; the Maldharis of Gir pass their whole lives.

Once, the Government had a good idea. It planned to prepare pukka houses of stones for these maldharis to uplift their living standards. The original aim of the scheme was to provide stones to these Maldharis to enable them to construct compound walls around their fold for the cattle, so that they may not require to cut thorny trees to make protection hedges for their cattle. Thus to protect the trees of the jungle and also to protect the cattle of the Maldharis, the stones were supplied.

The Government's plan was really strange. The Maldharis said, "Who can convince the government that with insufficient stones provided by it, no worthwhile compound wall can be constructed which can protect their cattle from the wild animals of the Jungle?" Instead, Maldharis thought to construct their pukka houses with the stones supplied by the Govt.

Some shrewd Govt. officer understood the fact and he said, 'We have supplied you the stones, you may construct whatever you wish, but don't ask for corrugated roofing sheets.'

There are many benevolent schemes of the Government but its benefits do not reach their needy and deserving people. As due to the leakages in the water drain the seepage of water occurs, the benefits of Govt. schemes hardly reach the needy. However, this scheme reached the Maldharis.

The Govt. provided one thousand stones per family to these Maldharis. These Maldharis facing difficulties for many years, felt as if they have won the lottery of lacs. The Maldharis prepared their pukka houses out of these stones.

Kalu Bhagat thought that he is not to construct his pukka house. The hut is better for him. He thought that every now and then the saints came to his Nes and faced difficulties in living in the hut. A small temple should be constructed using these stones so that the saints can lodge in it. Bhagat kept his hut as it was and used these stones in constructing a house of the God. He constructed the walls with stones and prepared the roof with roofing tiles. He prepared the flooring of earth.

The collegian youth of Ahmedabad Gurukul, under the leadership of Shamji Bhagat, did the labour work and in a short time, a small temple was ready.

Every stone of this temple is set with the love of heart and dedication.

No other temple is equal to the temple created with the love and dedication.

The devotees of Fatsar, Dron, Itwaya, Vadaviyala, Jargali, Gir gadhada, Khilavad etc. villages of Gir-area were informed about the ensuing arrival of Jogi Swami. The devotees became very glad because after many years, Jogi Swami was coming to this area to give his Darshan. At that time, Swami was to ninety years old.

Jogi Swami along with ten-twelve Saints came from Ahmedabad to Kanek by the forest road.

It was the most important day for Kalu Bhagat. For him it was just like Shree Ram had arrived at the house of Shabari. With great reverence, Bhagat welcomed Jogi Swami. There were tears of extreme joy in the eyes of Bhagat and the eyes of Jogi Swami were showering grace. At such an old age, suffering inconvenience, he had come to the Nes to fulfill the volition of a beloved devotee. In the evening, there was a meeting. The Maldharis from nearby Nesdas came to have Darshan of Swami. Many Maldharis became Satsangi by getting Tulsi bead rosaries to wear.

While returning from Chitrakut to Ayodhya, Bharataji wished to have some life-supporting thing from Bhagawan Ramchandraj. Bhagawan Ramchandraj fulfilled that wish by giving him 'Padooka' (open wooden *chappals*). In the same way Bhagat had thought, 'At such an old age, Swami has come to my house. Something should be done to make this incident worth remembering.'

Bhagat prepared a platform of stone and told Vishvavihari Swami, 'In the morning, we shall bathe the swami here.' Vishvavihari said, "Ok."

Bhagat prepared a bamboo scale with one tin-box at each end. He continued to bring water from the nearby well and saints and Vishvavihari Swami, bathed Swami with that water.

Swami also, remembering great saints and devotees, Shree Hari and places of pilgrimage, continued to take bath for quite some time. Then he asked, "Oh Bhagat! Are you glad now?"

Bhagat said, "Swami, we are very glad. You may please continue to shower your kindness forever.' Saying this Bhagat started doing *Dandvat Pranam*.

Swami said, "Bhagat, stop *Dhandvat*". Bhagat stopped doing Dantvat. Swami started to do Pooja. Kalu Bhagat also sat before him and while doing Darshan he started to sing morning verses (Prabhatiya) :Prabhat Bhayo Pranpyare, Jago Girdhari.

It was a very pious atmosphere in the grand Gir area. The sun showered its golden rays on the land. The birds were chirping. The peacocks were making sweet sounds and were dancing with joy. Small bells in the neck of the cows were sounding with melodious sound. The shepherds with their cattle had started their journey to the forests. The 'Kirtans' being sung by Bhagat were making the whole atmosphere sacred.

At about nine to ten in the morning, the devotees from nearby villages started coming to have the Darshan. A good meeting was arranged. Jogi Swami with his own hands performed the Pratishtha of Murtis of Shree Hari Krishna Maharaj and Shree Gopinathji Maharaj in a small temple at the Nes and Swami performed Aarti. Thus, a small temple was created at a Nes in the Gir forest.

O Maharaj! Let it Rain

During the stay at Kanek, a divine incident happened. This year, there was not much rain. In the beginning of the rainy season, there was some rain but thereafter it was delayed. Therefore, the farmers and the Maldharis were worried.

In the meanwhile, Swami arrived there. The Maldharis thought, 'Swami is a great saint. If Swami kindly prays to God, it will rain and our cattle could be saved.

Maldharis told Kalu Bhagat but Kalu Bhagat said, 'how can we tell this to Swami? Let us talk to Purani Balkrishnadasji Swami,' Thinking this way, they told Balswami about their trouble.

Balkrishna Swami said, "On behalf of you, I will request Swamiji."

Bal Swami told Jogi Swami, "Swami, in absence of rain, all these Maldharis and their cattle are suffering. If you kindly request Maharaj, it will rain."

On hearing the sufferings of Maldharis, Swami kindly prayed to Maharaj, "O Maharaj, these poor people are suffering for want of water, please kindly make it rain."

Maharaj heard the prayer of Swami, dark clouds started covering the sky and good rain started.

The saints said, "Swami, it is raining, let us take bath in the rain." Swami came out of the hut. Swami becomes very glad to have bath in the rain.

Vishwavihari Swami became worried, 'If it will rain more, the kuchcha roads (muddy roads) of Gir would be closed and then the car may not be driven on those roads. He said to Swami "Swami, if there is more rain, we will not be able to go from here. Therefore, kindly do as it may rain after our departure from here."

Swami said, "If it is so, we may pray to Maharaj that the rain should stop now." Moreover, to the surprise of all, after some time, the rain stopped. More surprising fact is that as soon as Swami came out of Gir area, on the same day, very good rainfall occurred in Gir. After many years, the Maldharis of Kanek still remember that divine incident.

Shreeji Maharaj always hears the prayer of Jogi Swami. Many saints and devotees are witnesses of the fact.

Let the Vow be continued . . .

Once Kalu Bhagat had gone to village Dron to purchase cottonseeds, oil cake etc. for the buffaloes. He had thought to return home the same day evening but due to some important work, he had to stay in Dron for two days. He had not taken his 'Pooja' with him. He had a vow not to take even water without performing 'Pooja'. This determination of 'Bhagat' was unshakable like a mountain.

Praising for such determined devotees Brahmanand Swami has composed many 'Kirtans' like,

'Tek Na Mele Re Te Marad Khara Jag Mahi'

Bhagat observed fast for two days. He had not taken food or even water during those two days. After returning home, he first performed Pooja and only then, he took his meal.

Whenever Bhagat comes for 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami, Swami says, 'My Kalu has come.'

Swami said, "Kalu belongs to Maharaj. Upon him there is grace of Maharaj and myself, hence nobody is able to harm him."

Kalu Bhagat also has unshakable faith in Maharaj and great reverence towards Jogi Swami. He firmly believes that whatever he is, is due to the grace of Shreeji Maharaj and the blessings of Jogi Swami.

In serving food to others, Bhagat's home is really great. Any wayfarer or saint, mendicant or whoever comes to his hut, Bhagat serves him milk, butter, curd and 'Rotla'. The blessings of saints are the biggest capital of Bhagat. That capital has made Kalu Bhagat a better devotee than any other well to do and wealthy person.

Grace Upon Boder Family...

Laljibhai Bodar was a good devotee in village Fatsar. Unfortunately, he became sick. In a small village like Fatsar, there could be no proper diagnosis or good treatment. Laljibhai's sickness increased. At last, he was admitted to a Hospital in Junagadh. The doctors diagnosed that both kidneys were likely to fail. One kidney was somewhat good. The doctors of Junagadh advised to take him to Ahmedabad for treatment.

Thereafter he was admitted to a hospital at Ahmedabad. His condition continued to be serious. On the other hand, the marriage of his son was to be arranged and Laljibhai's condition was serious. The entire family was preparing for the marriage ceremony and here in Ahmedabad, Laljibhai was counting his last moments. Therefore, entire family was much worried.

The mother of Laljibhai, Monghima was a good devotee. She had great reverence towards Jogi Swami. She thought, 'If prayed to Jogi Swami, my son Lalji could be saved and the worries of our family could be removed and the marriage ceremony could be concluded without any worry. But, who can convey my request to Jogi Swami?

Monghima remembered Kalu Bhagat. She met Kalu Bhagat, told him everything, and said, 'Kalu Bhagat, you may go to Rajkot to see Jogi Swami. Jogi Swami has given life to many people. If Jogi Swami kindly prays to Maharaj, my son Lalji can get new life.' While talking, Monghima's eyes were shedding tears.

Kalu Bhagat duly knew the faith and love of Monghima for the Bhagawan Swaminarayan. Kalu Bhagat said, 'Ma, don't

worry. I am going to Swami and will tell him everything. Swami will surely be graceful. He will remove the worry of your family.'

Kalu Bhagat came to Rajkot. On seeing Kalu Bhagat, Jogi Swami was very glad. The grace, which can't be earned even by big industrialists, that grace has been earned by a shepherd devotee living in a Nes of Gir. Virtuous and pious life and devotion touching the sky are the only means to get the grace of the God.

The great saints could not become glad with the heaps of wealth or worldly things. The entire wealth of the universe is like a blade of grass for them. The person who could be made glad with the wealth, he would be a merchant but not a great saint.

The items that make great saints glad are different and Kalu Bhagat has got those things easily.

Swami said, "O Kalu! When have you come?"

Bhagat said, "Swami, I have just come and have directly come for your Darshan."

Swami said, "For what purpose have you come?"

Bhagat said, "Swami, Laljibhai Bodar of Fatsar is swinging between life and death. He has been admitted to a hospital in Ahmedabad. The doctor says that both his kidneys have failed. On the other hand, marriage ceremony of his son is due. The whole family is in great worry. You may please pray to Maharaj. So, Maharaj may shower His grace to remove the worries of that family."

As per his nature, Swami gazed at the Murti of Shreeji Maharaj for some time. Thereafter he asked a saint to bring the water offered to Maharaj. He gave that water to Kalu Bhagat and said, 'you may immediately give this water to Laljibhai and

tell her mother to move the Mala with chanting the mantra 'Swaminarayan'. Shree Hari will do well, but do not delay in giving this water to Laljibhai. Swami repeatedly stressed the need to haste in giving the water to Laljibhai.

Here in Ahmedabad the doctors told the family members of Laljibhai that the only remedy is to change the kidney. Delay in the same is risky. But, how one can get the donor immediately? Therefore, take him home, come after arranging for a kidney.

Laljibhai, swinging between life and death, was brought to Fatsar. At the same time, Kalu Bhagat also reached Fatsar with water given by Jogi Swami.

As Jogi Swami has said, with chanting of Swaminarayan Swaminarayan Maha-mantra, that water was given to Laljibhai. As soon as Laljibhai drank that water, new life started spreading in his body. With this water of 'Prasadi' Shree Laljibhai was cured.

The marriage ceremony of his son was celebrated with great joy. The whole ceremony was concluded with fervour. Three months passed. Again, Laljibhai's health deteriorated and he was again admitted to a hospital at Ahmedabad.

Again, Monghima told Kalu Bhagat, "Bhagat, you may please go to Swami. If Swami showers his grace, Lalji could be cured."

Kalu Bhagat said, "Ma! once Maharaj has heard your prayer and Laljibhai was cured. The marriage ceremony also was celebrated with great joy. Now I hesitate to again request Jogi Swami."

Monghima said, "Then do one thing. Let my Lalji have the 'Darshan' of Swami. Then let it be as Maharaj wish"

Kalu Bhagat came to Rajkot from Fatsar and Laljibhai was brought to Rajkot from Ahmedabad for the Darshan of Swami. In the afternoon, at the time of awakening of the God, they had the 'Darshan' of Swamiji. Swamiji was moving the Mala. Bhandari Hariprasad Swami along with Laljibhai came to Jogi Swami.

Bhandari Swami told Jogi Swami, "Swami, this Laljibhai's kidney requires to be changed. His wife has decided to give her kidney. You may please pray to Maharaj so that the operation becomes successful." Swami gazed at Laljibhai for some time and then he closed his eyes and did not speak anything. Bhandari Swami again requested but Swami did not reply.

Bhandari Swami again requested thrice. Swami opened his eyes but did not speak anything. He continued to move Mala. When Bhandari Swami still insisted, Swamiji said, "Now Maharaj does not wish. Let him wear this garland of 'Prasadi' for the good of his soul." Saying this Jogi Swami gave a garland. Bhandari Swami gave it to Laljibhai to wear.

Laljibhai was a courageous man. He said to Kalu Bhagat, 'Bhagat, I have received a garland of Prasadi from Jogi Swami. This garland is for my farewell from this world but now I have no fear of death. For many years, we have followed the tenets of 'Satsang' together. We have got the benefit of association with great saints like Shashtriji Maharaj, Purani Swami Premprakashdasji and Jogi Swami. Therefore, now I have no desire to live more and no grief of death. After meeting such great saints, we are fortunate in our life and more fortunate after death. When Swami has given me a garland my death is glorified.'

Hearing the daring talks of Laljibhai, Kalu Bhagat also became glad. The people can talk boldly but the test of boldness could be when testing time comes.

The moments of death can confuse even big people. The moments of death become auspicious for the people who can welcome it.

Bhagawan Swaminarayan has given an invaluable promise to his devotees, "At the end of life of my devotee, I will surely come to take him to my abode." This promise has made thousands of devotees fearless. In this way, Laljibhai Bodar became fearless and went to Akshardham with the remembrance of Shreeji Maharaj. Thus, the death of Laljibhai became an auspicious incident.

[Note: This incident has been narrated by Kalu Bhagat himself. This incident occurred before his eyes.]

In connection with the above incident of Laljibhai Bodar, one divine incident happened. Talking about this, Kalu Bhagat said, "A volition had taken place in my mind when I was coming to Rajkot second time, on the suggestion of Monghima. Bhagawan Ramchandraj had given a pair of wooden shoes to Bharatji. Bhagawan Swaminarayan had given a turban to Ardesharji. In the same way, it will be good if Swami would give me something to remember him forever. Swami has given me garlands so many times. 'Prasadi' of sugar crystals also has been given to me in abundance but this time Swami would give me such thing which I can preserve in my home for ever. Again I thought, 'how can I demand such thing on my own from Swami?'"

With such thoughts, I had gone to Jogi Swami and I got endless surprise. As if Maharaj had inspired Swami, Swami

said, "O Kalu, it is good that you have come. Take this coconut and preserve it at your home for ever." On hearing these words of Swami, I had tears in my eyes. Swami had known my volition.

Swami gives prasadi of sugar crystals to all, but had never given coconut to anybody before. I have preserved that coconut in my shop at Girgadhada even today and I daily perform 'Pooja' of the same. Bravo that devotee and regards to Jogi Swami!

Dumb Boy Got Speech

Swami was moving in the villages much. He has endless kindness towards the poor Haribhaktas of villages. Swami always showers grace upon all the Haribhaktas.

As with the rise of the moon in the sky, tidal waves occur in the sea, a tide of Bhajan and 'Satsang' occurs wherever Swami goes.

In the early morning, Swami, after taking bath sits to perform Pooja. He moves Mala up to noon, until the 'Thal' is served to the God. One by one, Haribhaktas would come for the Darshan and would feel themselves fortunate. Some would read Vachnamrut, some would listen to it and some would do 'Darshan' sitting far. Sometimes Swami would move his eyes around and whenever his sight moves, a tide of reverence occurs in the heart of devout.

Once, Swami had come to Fatsar. Fatsar is a village graced by many great saints. Today the outskirts of the village has become like a barren land but before many years, it was covered with thick woods and was a beautiful village of Gir area. The lions of Gir moved around this village every night and their roars resounded in the hills of Gir.

Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj has constructed a temple in this village. In almost every house of this village, someone has studied in the Gurukul. Years ago, there were no means of transport, yet Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, Purani Swami Premprakashdasji and Jogi Swami used to come in this village frequently.

In Fatsar, Vallabhbapa Jasani was a very good devotee. Kind and innocent Vallabhbapa had much love for Jogi Swami. His son Bachubhai is also a good devotee having much oneness with the saints.

Batuk, son of Bachubhai became eight years old but unfortunately, he was unable to speak. Despite much effort, he remained dumb.

One day Bachubhai came with that boy to Swami and requested, "Swami, this boy has become eight years old, yet he is dumb and cannot speak. You may kindly pray to Maharaj, to enable this boy to speak."

Swami gazed for some time at that boy with grace. Then he prayed to Maharaj and let that boy sit nearby. Swami gave him water offered to Maharaj. Then as a teacher teaches alphabet to small children, Swami started making him to speak "Swaminarayan, Swaminarayan".

The assembly of Haribhaktas was watching and a divine incident happened. The boy who was dumb for eight years, started speaking, 'Swaminarayan, Swaminarayan' with Jogi Swami! Unbelievable miracle had happened.

There is a story in 'Puranas' (ancient Hindu Scriptures). Dhruvji performed rigorous penance in Madhuvan. The God gave him His 'Darshan'. Dhruvaji thought to sing prayer of the God but due to performing of a very difficult penance, he was

unable to speak. The eyes were shedding tears. Shree Hari saw the pain of His devotee and He touched His 'Panchjanya' conch to the cheek of Dhruvji. With the touch of 'Panchjanya' conch Dhruvji got miraculous speech on his tongue. The same divine incident happened in Fatsar. With the grace of an accomplished great saint, the dumb boy got the power to speak. Today that boy is in Surat, earning good amount and happy. He keeps good Satsang also.

Sometimes when Swami would be in a joyous mood, he would say 'Shastri, Maharaj had made that boy of Fatsar speak. That boy is now in Surat. He is observing good Satsang. See the miracle of Maharaj!'

Emancipation of Kaliya and Bhuriya

In the green Nagher area, there is a village namely Itwaya. With the efforts of Sadguru Purani Swami Shree Gopinathdasji and Sadguru Shree Narayandasji Swami, Satsang had spread in this village. Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, Purani Swami, Jogi Swami etc. saints visited this village many times.

Almost in every village in India, there is a Ramji Mandir (Temple of Shree Ram) which is called in local language as 'Choro'. There may be many 'Chora' but the 'Choro' of village Itwaya is unique. When Sadguru Purani Swami Gopinathdasji and Sadguru Narayandasji Swami arrived in this village, there was no Swaminarayan temple. The Pratishtha of Murti of Bhagawan Swaminarayan was performed in the 'Chora' at the hands of great saints. It became the first 'Choro' with Sahajanand Swami's Murti.

There was a good devotee of Itwaya namely Premjibhai Ramani. His farm was away from the village in the foot of the

hill. Two serpents lived on that farm: one was dark black and one was wheatish in colour. Both were very powerful and terrifying. Both would not let others live happily. Both were companions, playing with each other. Sometimes they used to wrap around the legs of cattle and sometimes they would threaten the family members of Premjibhai. Sometimes they used to sit on the heap of grass, not allowing anyone to touch the grass. It was difficult to stay at the farm at night. No one was able to sleep on the land. The people were compelled to sleep on a cot tied on the tree, otherwise no one knew when 'Kaliya' and Bhuriya' reach. Thus, there was a great terror of these two degenerated souls in the farm.

Once Premjibhai came to Rajkot. He told Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, "There is a great terror of serpents in the farm. They are harassing much. They sit on the heaps of dry grass. If anybody goes to take dry grass, they oppose with hissing. For the last three days, cart comes home empty. We take cattle feed from others to feed our cattle. Please kindly show us a remedy.'

Shastriji Maharaj said, "This is a case for Jogi Swami's court. You may go to Jogi Swami and tell him. He will show you some remedy."

Premjibhai came to Jogi Swami and told him everything about his difficulty. Jogi Swami meditated upon Shreeji Maharaj for some time and said, 'Take this water of 'Prasadi' and sprinkle it in your farm. The grey coloured serpent will go away but the black serpent will not go. After some time, there will be a Murti Pratishtha ceremony at Itwaya temple. At that time we will come there and do needful to remove Kaliya.'

Premjibhai took that water home and sprinkled it on the farm. Thereafter the grey serpent disappeared.

After some time the Murti Pratishtha ceremony in the newly built temple at Itwaya was to be celebrated. Many saints had gone there for preliminary arrangements. Jogi Swami also arrived there.

Premjibhai came to Swami and said "' Swami, with your grace, the grey serpent has fled away but still the black serpent is harassing us as usual.'

Swami said, "We will come to your farm at our convenience. Maharaj Will do well".

In the meantime, some saints went to the farm but Kaliyo ran after them and they were forced to flee.

The saints came running to the temple and told Jogi Swami, 'Swami, Kaliyo is very bad. It ran after us and we had to flee.'

Swami said, 'You were much confident and proud also. Nothing is to worry. Tomorrow, after awakening of the God in the afternoon, we will go to the farm and will do the remedy of Kaliya.'

Swami, sometimes remembering that incident with a laugh used to say, "Shastri, the saints had much confidence that what can Kaliya do to them? But 'Kaliyo' ran to them in such a manner that they were compelled to flee leaving behind their water jugs."

Next day in the afternoon, after waking up the God, Jogi Swami came to the farm. It was about 3 or 4 O'clock in the afternoon. The sun was setting in the west. The shepherds were grazing their cows far. The farms were full of green crops. The birds were chirping.

Jogi Swami took bath at the farm. With wet clothes, he walked around the farm. At that time 'Kaliyo' came running

but on seeing Swami, with its spread hood, it remained away. Swami uttered 'Swaminarayan Swaminarayan' and sprinkled water on 'Kaliya' and said, "O Kaliya, You go to Badrikashram. Why are you staying here?"

With these words of Swami, a miracle happened. Slowly Kaliya' folded his hood, bowed down and slipped away in the fencing of the farm. Thereafter the 'Kaliya' could never be seen in the farm.

Thus Jogi Swami uplifted those both the souls, who had degenerated due to their actions of the earlier births.

This boy will be an industrialist

Village Derdi of Bha Kumbhaji means a village of 'Prasadi' of Bhagawan Swaminarayan. There was a leading Haribhakta devotee namely Panchabapa in this village. Panchabapa had great reverence for Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. Panchabapa's son Devshibhai had a son namely Madhusudan. In the early age, all called him 'Madhu'.

Once Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj had come to village Ujala for reading 'Shreemad Bhagwat' (*Saptah*). Panchabapa from village Deradi had also come with his grandson Madhusudan to listen to the 'Katha'.

Panchabapa said to Swami, "Swami, we want to admit this Madhu to the Gurukul for study."

At that time the Gurukul had just started. Sixty to Seventy students were studying in the Gurukul. On the request of Panchabapa, Gurukul gave admission to Madhu.

Madhu was of little age. He had never had an occasion to be away from home. Hence, he was not feeling himself

comfortable in the Gurukul. He was homesick and wept frequently. Swami Premprakash Purani was better than thousands of mothers. He was just like an ocean of love. He used to call Madhu with love. He talked to Madhu, and took good care of him. Sometimes he told Madhu to read Vachanamrut also. Thus with such treatment, Madhu came out of homesickness.

Now Madhu found himself comfortable in Gurukul. Panchabapa used to come to Gurukul every now and then for the Darshan. He also saw Madhu.

One day, it was evening. Panchabapa had come to Gurukul. After taking his meal, he was standing outside the dining hall. In the meantime, incidentally, Jogi Swami had also come there and he was standing near Panchabapa.

The students were coming out of the dining hall after taking their meal. Madhu also came out after taking his meal. He saw his grandfather, hence he came running and as per the manners of Gurukul, he bowed down to Panchabapa and said 'Jay Swaminarayan'. He also bowed down to Jogi Swami.

Panchabapa said to Swami, "Swami, please give blessings to this boy, so he can study well and can get good service".

Swami gazed at Madhu for a while and said, "Bapa, how can one be prosperous with service? This boy will become a big industrialist after study."

Blessings of the great saint Jogi Swami showered on a soul and his words came true in too.

In those days, the aim of most of the students was to get good service after the completion of study. Madhusudan was also thinking 'After completion of service, I will get good service'.

But blessings of Swami led him to a different career. Such circumstances took place, in which he had to harness himself in the business. Madhusudan oil mill was established in village Derdi. Due to the grace of a great saint like Jogi Swami, the business continuously increased. The business spread from Derdi to Gondal, Rajkot and up to Surat.

Due to the blessings of the saints, there was good unity between the brothers and resultantly they became very successful in business. At last, on the words of a word-accomplished saint Jogi Swami, Madhusudan became a big business-man and associated himself with many service-oriented institutions. He also became the chairperson of Shree Radharamandev Temple board of Junagadh and he strengthened and improved the administration of the temple very much.

For Madhubhai, Gurukul is Mother institution. Hence, he is associated in various service activities of the Gurukul.

Narrating the success of his life, Madhubhai says even today, "Jogi Swami is a word accomplished saint. I am the living example of it. I wanted to find service but on the words of Jogi Swami, I became a big industrialist. I have decorated my life with the virtues of the Gurukul. Whatever I am and my family today, is due to the Gurukul, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, Purani Swami Premprakashdasji and the blessings of Jogi Swami."

Grace upon Gajraj

Most of the villages around Rajkot such as Mengani, Makhavad, Kangashiyali, Lodhika, Nonghanchora, Khirsara, Vagudad, Vada, Raj Samadhiyala, Padasan and Khambha are of Darbar (ruler community) Satsangis. In these villages, there

is a great dignity of Jogi Swami. The Darbar community has got much love and faith for Jogi Swami. Most of the Darbars follow Swamiji's words.

As such, these Darbars are followers of this Sampraday since the time of Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan. Some Darbars of this area had set out in search of the God.

Darbar Sartansinhji of Padasan came into the contacts of Shree Swarupanand Swami. Due to the preachings of Swarupanand Swami, Darbars gave up vices like wine, meat and opium etc. and became Satsangis.

Swami told Darbar, "The God has taken birth on the earth and He is living in Gadhapur. If you go for His Darshan, your life will be uplifted.' On hearing these words of Sadguru Swarupanand Swami, the desire to see the God arose in his heart. He told his friends, Jethiji of Khambha, Meghabhai of Vadali and Hakabhai of Kangashiyali, We shall go to Gadhapur to see the Bhagawan Swaminarayan'. With such determination, the group of these four friends started journey on the way to Gadhapur for the Darshan of Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan.

While they were on the way, they thought, 'we would certainly go to Gadhapur, but how can we know that Swaminarayan is Bhagwan? We will test him.'

All thought that Swaminarayan does not know us. We have not seen Him and He has not seen us. If He is the God, He should recognise us and call us by names. Then we can believe that He is God. Keeping in mind such a test, they came to Gadhada.

It was noon but the atmosphere in Gadhapur was auspicious. Bhagawan Shree Hari was sitting in divine meeting of great saints and devotees. As the moon seems beautiful

amongst the stars, Shree Hari looked beautiful and pleasing amongst the saints and devotees. As soon as these four friends had the Darshan of Shree Hari, they felt divine calm, pleasure and peace in their hearts. They had never before experienced such divine peace.

All the four were doing Darshan with utmost reverence. At that time Shree Hari welcomed them and said, 'welcome Sartanji, welcome Jethiji, welcome Meghabhai and Hakabhai, we have been waiting for you since long'.

With the warm welcome by Shree Hari, all the four friends felt themselves fulfilled with great joy in their hearts. They surmised, 'How Swaminarayan could know our names? He could know our thoughts, hence He is certainly a God.'

All the four, with folded hands, said, "Maharaj, please make us your disciples."

Maharaj said, 'When you first met our saints, since then you have become our devotees.' All the four felt much joy in their hearts and they became strong followers of Shree Hari.

Amongst all those four fulfilled souls, at the sixth generation of Jethiji, there came Nanbhabapu and Nanbhabapu's son is Gajrajsinhji. In his childhood, Gajrajsinhji used to come to the temple with his father and did Darshan of saints. Thus, the seeds of Satsang were sown in this brilliant and naughty child. But in his youth, however, he was diverted to bad company. His father Nanbhabapu was a police inspector. He was transferred to Porbandar. Now no one was to check and control Gajrajsinh in Khambha. Thus, his life became just like a boat without a sailor.

A company of bad people can divert anybody to the wrong path. Gajrajsinh learnt to drink. Quarrels, dacoity and

bullying became the part of his life. He became a terror for the people living in Khambha and nearby villages.

It was S.Y. 1963. Jogi Swami had arrived in village Rib near Rajkot. Swami was a shelter for the people living in the villages around Rajkot. The Haribhaktas (devotees) of village Rib had great reverence for Jogi Swami. Most of the Haribhaktas were from farmer community. These Haribhaktas were poor by nature and meek in dealings. On arrival of Jogi Swami, the devotees assembled in the temple. There was no light on the faces of these devotees. All were worried. Swami asked, 'Are you all happy?' None could reply. Therefore, Swami again asked, "Why are you not uttering any word? Have you any difficulty?"

Haribhaktas folded their hands and said, 'Swami, we are facing great difficulty.' Swami said, 'Tell me whatever it is.'

The devotees said, "Swami, there is a great tyranny of Gajraj in the village. Any time he comes, fights with us, snatches away our money and harasses us much. Swami, you are a capable saint. Please do something for us to remove this difficulty. Otherwise we will not be able to live in this village'.

On hearing the plight of poor Haribhaktas, the heart of Jogi Swami was filled with compassion. He consoled the people and said, 'Don't worry, I will do the remedy of Gajrajsinh'. After saying this, Swami directly came to Khambha from Rib.

On the arrival of Swami, the devotees of Khambha became very glad. Swami was doing 'Pooja' upto late in the morning. In the afternoon, also, he was moving Mala and after waking up the God in the afternoon, he was continuing to move Mala. He took his meal at five in the evening.

One afternoon, Swami was moving Mala. One or two farmer Haribhaktas and two-three Darbar Haribhaktas were

sitting before Swami. Swami looked toward Balubha bapu and said, 'Darbar, go and tell Gajraj to come here'. Darbar said 'Swami, he is not worthy to be called here. His farm has become a centre of wine and even if you call him, he will not come.'

Swami said, "You may go and try to call him. He will surely come." On the order of Jogi Swami, Balubhabapu went to the farm of Gajrajsinh and said to him, "Jogi Swami calls you to the temple."

On hearing the name of Jogi Swami, he became stunned. The awe of Jogi Swami had spread in these villages since long. The Darbars of this area were attached to Swami with the relationship of Preceptor-disciple and with the blessings of Jogi Swami they were living pious life and had become very happy also. But for Gajrajsinh, it was not believable that Jogi Swami would call him.

Gajrajsinh thought, "Is Jogi Swami calling a wicked person like me? It is not believable." He asked Balubha, "Is Jogi Swami really calling me? Are you not making any mistake?"

Balubha said, "Yes, Jogi Swami is calling you."

Gajrajsinh said, "But how can I come there at this time? I have drunk wine. Swami will scold me."

Balubha said, "Swami has emphasised me to come here to call you to the temple and he will take his meal only after you come there." Gajrajsinh was entangled in confusion and said, "Ok, you may go. I shall come to the temple soon."

Gajrajsinh thought, 'It is unbelievable. Jogi Swami may not call a wicked person like me. Surely, somebody should have complained against me. Swami will scold me.'

War of thoughts started in the mind of Gajrajsinh. The words 'Swami is calling' started resounding in his mind. His

soul awakened, 'When Swami is calling, I must go', the voice came from his heart.

Gajrajsinh washed his hands and feet. He cleaned his mouth very much. He put some seeds of cardamom in his mouth. He plucked a ripe Papaya fruit to offer to Swami.

Gajrajsinh was really 'Gajraj' (The elephant king). Due to the company of wicked persons, he had strayed from the path of good life. But now Swami had decided to drive him to the right path.

Gajrajsinh was experiencing some fear to go to Swami. The people of nearby villages were fearing from Gajraj that Gajraj was experiencing fear by the awe of Swami.

On the words of Jogi Swami, Gajraj had to come to the temple. Swami was moving the Mala. Gajraj came near Swami. He laid a Papayas at the feet of Swami and bowed down to him. Swami gazed at Gajrajsinh. The eyes of Swami were showering love and compassion upon Gajraj. The sight was capable to control any great elephant. Gajraj bowed down his head at the feet of Swami.

Swami looked to Balubha and said, 'Darbar you were telling that Gajrajsinh would not come. See he has come. He is our soul. Where can he go leaving us?'

With the loving words of Swami, the heart of Gajraj was shaken. He thought, How great this pious saint is, and how wicked is myself! I am not worthy to sit near Swami.' His mind was overflowing with repentance for the sinful acts done by him.

The words of Swami, 'This is our soul, how can he go elsewhere leaving us?' were constantly resounding in his heart. His heart was churning.

Again, Swami concentrated his sight on Gajraj. Gajraj could not bear the heat of the sight of a great saint. He bowed down his sight. With the words full of love, Swami scolded him, 'Oh! Your harassment has increased. There are so many complaints against you. By harassing poor people, you are doing grave sins. The God will not forgive you if you continue to do this. You will go to hell where there will be no end of your sufferings. Therefore, give up all these.'

As with the iron hook, one can control an elephant, with the words of Swami, Gajrajsinh surrendered to Swami. His soul woke up. His eyes started shedding tears of repentance. He folded his hands and said to Swami, 'Now I will not harass anybody. Please forgive me'

Swami gave water of 'Prasadi' in his hand and made him to take oath to observe five principles of good conduct and thus controlled him with the chain of religious tenets. The devotees present in the temple could see an unbelievable and wonderful scene.

As such, Gajrajsinh was from the lineage graced by Bhagawan Shree Hari but due to bad company, he had strayed from the path of good conduct. But a great saint Jogi Swami made him to come to the right path.

In the year of 1972, Gajrajsinh suffered an attack of paralysis and was admitted to a hospital at Rajkot. The Doctors gave good treatment but they said, "The attack is so severe that perhaps the half of his body would be paralysed permanently."

Jilubhai, a brother of Gajrajsinhji came to Jogi Swami and told him everything in detail. Swami prayed to Maharaj and gave him the water of 'Abhishek' and Prasadi of Sugar crystals. And said, "Give this to Gajrajsinh. Maharaj will cure him."

With the grace of Swami, Gajrajsinhji was completely cured and he came for the Darshan of Swami. He bowed down to Jogi swami and said, "Swami only with your blessings I have got new life." Swami said, "Darbar, this is a result of grace of Shreeji Maharaj. One cannot know when and what can happen into the body. Maharaj has protected you."

With the kindness and blessings of Jogi Swami, Darbar Gajrajsinhji became very happy. Today he has approximately 500 *bighas* of land. He takes much interest in the service of cows. He has approx. 100 cows and gives employment to many people.

Once he was elected the president of Taluka Panchayat and with this rank, he has done many benevolent services for the people.

By expressing sense of gratitude towards Jogi Swami, Gajrajsinh himself says, 'What I am and whatever I have is due to the blessings of Shreeji Maharaj and Jogi Swami. Otherwise I have done innumerable sinful acts.'

Jogi Swami wished to have a good temple and cultural centre in village Khambha. Narendrasinhji and other Darbars were ready to serve for this in every way to get the grace of Swami but despite their intense efforts, they did not succeed in getting a plot of land for the same.

On the outskirts of the village, there was a plot of land at an important place belonging to the Gram Panchayat. The plot was for public purpose. Swami saw that plot. Swami said to Darbar Gajrajsinhji, 'Any how, get this plot for the temple. We want to create a temple there.' Darbar, by removing all the hindrances got that plot for the temple got more blessings of Swami.

Today as per the likings of Jogi Swami, there is a beautiful and artistic, newly built temple at that site.

Service of Gardening

Jogi Swami likes to serve in the garden very much. Swami has served in the garden of Rajkot Gurukul for many years. When Swami was serving in the garden, the glory and beauty of the garden was unique. Swami himself took care of flower plants, he himself watered the garden and applied manures also. In those days, Swami had reared Himalayan Roses in the garden. Himalayan roses become as big as sunflower and fill the atmosphere with fragrance.

The flowers of *Mogara* blossomed in a big quantity. In the evening, the fresh buds of *Doller* flowers were plucked. These would be kept in a wet cloth. In the next morning, all those buds would blossom. Gulchhadi flowers were also plucked in quantity. Particularly in the winter, the flowers of Guldawudi and Galgota also blossomed in plenty. Thus in various seasons, with various kinds of flowers, the atmosphere of Gurukul remained full of fragrance.

On one side the fragrance of virtues and on the other hand the fragrance of flowers in the Gurukul, the confluence of both created a unique atmosphere.

In the early morning, when the students wore yellow shawls would plucked the flowers. The scene would remind anybody the grand atmosphere of ancient Ashram of a Rushi. Mostly we, two-three students studying in the Gurukul used to reach to Swami in the garden to help.

In the evening, when the buds of *Doller* would be plucked, Swami, with plucking the buds, used to sing Kirtans in a sweet voice.

The voice of Swami was very good. The stanzas of Kirtans being sung in rhythm directly touched the hearts of the listeners. With those words of Swami, our hearts were transformed. With the plucking of buds of *Doller*, Swami also plucked us. As if we were the children of some ascetic in the previous births and now, we have attained the lap of an ascetic.

Balkrishna Swami, Shreehari Swami, Vishnu Swami, these saints were earlier serving in the flower garden. Sometimes Swami also gladly says, 'These are men of our flower garden'.

Shree Nanji of Mankuva (Kutch), Arjun Bhagat of Madhapar, Dr. Dayal of Bhal Chokdi, Dr. Gadhiya of Ugamedi, Jasani of Manavadar etc. so many students have pleased the Swami by their services in the garden.

Swami has unique art of making floral garlands. With stringing of Roses, Galgota and Jasmine flowers, Swami used to prepare extremely beautiful floral garlands for the Ghanshyam Maharaj & Deities, which beautify in the neck of Shreeji Maharaj. In the season of Mogra (Jasmine flowers), long garlands of five to six strands would be prepared. In the prayer hall of Rajkot Gurukul, long garlands that reach from the neck to the legs were being presented to Ghanshyam Maharaj as if Maharaj had worn the clothes of flowers.

In the summer season, heaps of Mogra flowers were being plucked from the garden and the work of preparing floral garlands was continued up to noon. Some floral garlands were also being sent to temple at Bhupendra Road (Rajkot). Whenever Swami came to know that somebody was to go to Bhuj, Vadtal or Gadhapur, immediately Swami would arrange to prepare

floral garlands. He used to pack the same carefully in the leaves of castor or almond to keep the garlands fresh. Thus, Swami has sent floral garlands to the temples at Junagadh, Gadhada, Dholera, Vadtal, Ahmedabad, Bhuj, Muli and even as far as to Chhapaiya (U.P.).

One day Vishwavihari Swami said, 'Swami, you do great services of flowers for the God.'

Swami said, 'the elephant devotee gave only one flower to the God and the God was much pleased. We are extremely fortunate that we got the opportunity to serve the God with flowers for so many years!'

This view of Swami is unique and divine. Every action of Swami is attached to the Murti of the God and full of devotion.

Headache Cured . . .

Sadguru Kothari Swami Shree Devkrushnadasji was suffering from headache. He was afflicted by severe pain in his head. He was unable to bear it. Dev Swami thought that instead of going to an expert doctor, why not consult word-accomplished saint of Shree Hari, Jogi Swami living with us? Thinking this way, Dev Swami went to Jogi Swami.

Jogi Swami was moving Mala before the Murti of Shree Hari. Rugnathdas Swami was reading the divine *Charitras* of Shreeji Maharaj. Dev Swami sat there for some time to listen Katha. After the conclusion of 'Katha,' he told his story to Jogi Swami. Jogi Swami put his hand on the head of Dev Swami and said, "Dev Swami it appears that there is more heat in your head but nothing else. You may prepare a 'Rotlo' (loaf) of earth of ant-hill or of black soil and after tying it on your head, go to sleep. The God will cure your headache.'

Dev Swami, after tying a 'Rotlo' of black soil on his head went to sleep for one and half hours and his headache was removed. Thus with the medicine and blessings, the headache was cured immediately.

Jump, you will Swim . . .

Behind the Gurukul Vidyalay, in the south, earlier there was a good garden. Jogi Swami himself took care of that garden. In that garden the flowers of Roses, Doller and Mogara emitted divine fragrance. The Roses of Badrinarayan (Himalayan Rose) were as big as sunflowers and were full of fragrance. Even today, its remembrance is preserved in our mind.

We have seen Swami, singing stanzas of Kirtans in a sweet voice while plucking the buds of Doller, cutting the roses and applying fertilizer in the garden. We can never forget it. This garden of Jogi Swami has not given flowers only. From the students who were serving in the garden, many have initiated themselves in the saintliness and have become very good saints. They have also blossomed like the flowers of that garden.

There was a well near the garden. The well was as deep as 60 to 70 feet. The well remained full of water. There was no scarcity of water in those days. Until there would be water in Aaji Dam, the water in the wells of Gurukul would not dry out. The students and the saints took bath in that well.

Jogi Swami also took bath in that well. He used to swim for hours in the 'Padmasan' position without moving his hands and legs. For young students like us, it was like magic to see Swami swimming without moving his hands and legs.

Once, Swami was swimming in that well. Some students were standing at the edge of the well, watching Swami with surprise. One of them was Lalji. His complexion was somewhat black. He was young in age. He served in the garden with zeal. Lalji had much love and faith in Swami. Swami had also love and grace for him.

Suddenly Swami said from the well, "O Lalji! You may jump in the well."

Lalji said, "Swami, I don't know how to swim. I may sink."

Swami said, "Jump in, you will learn to swim. You will not sink."

For Lalji, order of Swami meant order of the God. Anybody else would fear to jump in such a deep well full of water but Lalji had full faith in Swami. On the words of Swami, though he did not know how to swim, he jumped into the well. He had unshakable faith in that Swami would not let me sink.

In the forests, there exists one kind of bird namely yellowbelly marmot. It is as long as our Cuckoo. Its colour would be grey-yellow whitish and long curved beak like a knife. It makes a cave like hollow, in the trunk of the tree and rears its young ones. The female bird abandons all its feathers and lives in that small cave like hollow in the trunk of a tree for many days to rear its young ones.

The male bird would cover the hole of the cave with earth. The female would lay eggs in the cave. The male would bring food, would come to the cave, would sing in a sweet voice and by entering its beak in a small hole of the cave, would give food to the female. The female would incubate the eggs. The child bird would then get the wings. Then the child bird would

become able to fly and female bird would come out of the cave with that child bird, slowly the mother bird would take that child bird to the highest branch of that tree and mother bird would give a jolt to the child bird. The child bird would fall down but while falling down, the wings of that child bird would open and it would start flying.

For Lalji it happened in the same way. On the words of Swami he jumped into the well full of water. The hands and legs started moving miraculously and he learnt to swim. Swami had not even touched him. With his graceful sight only, Swami made Lalji swim. The story did not end at that point. On the words of Swami, as he jumped into the well, he also jumped into the ascetism to become a saint. Lalji not only learnt to swim but also learnt to swim to cross over the cycle of birth and death.

Due to the endless love and reverence towards Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, Purani Swami and Jogi Swami, Lalji became saint. He got the name Purani Balkrishnadasji. He is looking after Memnagar and Chharodi Gurukuls today.

Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj was much pleased with Bal Swami. In the later part of his life, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj mostly lived in Ahmedabad. Bal Swami also pleased his Gurudev with his skilled and loving services.

I cannot restrain myself to narrate an incident of the life of Bal Swami. When Shastriji Maharaj was about to leave this world to go to Akshardham, he called Bal Swami and said, "Balkrishna! I am much pleased with you." Saying this he had presented a footprint of Shreeji Maharaj to Bal Swami.

It was a Murti Pratishtha ceremony in Chharodi Gurukul. Pratishtha was to be done at the pious hands of Jogi Swami. Bal Swami thought that the footprints of Shreeji Maharaj

given to him by Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj should be placed in Chharodi Gurukul to enable everybody to have the Darshan of the same. He placed the footprints in the throne with the Murti. Such thing could not happen without deep understanding and generosity. After the Murti Pratishtha ceremony was over, Jogi Swami stayed there for some more days.

One day in the morning, Swami decided to go to Rajkot. It was early morning. Swami was doing 'Pooja'. While doing 'Pooja', suddenly he became glad and started remembering Bal Swami frequently. He asked younger saint to call Bal Swami.

Younger saint asked, "Swami, why for?"

Swami said, "As I want to go to Rajkot, I should take his permission."

When Bal Swami knew that Swami was remembering him, he immediately came to Swami. Swami was preparing to fold up his 'Pooja'. The Pooja, which was being performed by Jogi Swami's Guru Mahant Swami, the same Pooja is being performed daily by Jogi Swami. After the departure of Mahant Swami for Akshardham, the footprints of Shreeji Maharaj, which were worshipped by Shree Mahant Swami for many years, that foot-prints was in the 'Pooja' of Jogi Swami. While folding up the 'Pooja', Swami took those footprints in his hand, touched them to his eyes and said to Bal Swami, "Balkrishna! You may now keep these foot-prints."

That was a divine incident. A 'Paramhans' (highest order of saintliness) was showering his grace upon a deserving saint. I was present there at that time. Swami, with great joy, raising his hands, gave the footprints to Bal Swami and the footprints directly reached the head of Bal Swami. That incident is narrated as it is preserved in my heart.

Jogi Swami continued the flow of grace showered by Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj on Bal Swami.

Gurukul - A home away from home

He is only the saint who can give peace.

He is the saint whose 'Darshan' pacifies worldly desires.

He is the saint whose sight pacifies passion.

The smile of a saint can destroy ego.

The words of a saint can destroy anger.

The volition of a saint can destroy sufferings.

One devout soul came to study in the Gurukul. His virtues of earlier birth rose up. He got love and reverence for the saints. An intense desire to become a saint developed in him.

The parents were not allowing him to become a saint. After many struggles, he became a saint. After becoming a saint, he passed some time peacefully but slowly the memories of home started disturbing him. Sometimes he wept.

The thoughts of returning home kept rising in his mind. It is better to remember the saints at home than to remember home while in saintliness. Such type of struggle in his mind was going on daily.

One day he became confused very much. Therefore, he strongly desired to go back home. Again he thought, 'How I have left home? I was not permitted to become a saint, yet I have become a saint. However, I could not remove the remembrance of home from my mind. What can I do? To whom,

I should tell such a thing? Shastriji Maharaj is a big saint. How can I dare to tell this to him?

“But the things of mind can’t be discussed in public.

One’s own creates troubles,

The mind becomes confused.

Despite all these,

One can tell the secrets of hearts to a proper person only.”

The confused devout saint thought to tell about his difficulty to Jogi Swami with a view to have his grace.

Jogi Swami was moving Mala at his seat. That saint went to him, bowed down to him and sat nearby.

Jogi Swami looked at him with a graceful eyes and said, “O Sadhuram! What is the matter?”

With these words of Swami, the young saint got the courage. He said, ‘Swami, the thoughts of going back home disturb me much. I am trying to convince my mind so much, yet such thoughts cannot be stopped. Therefore, I have come to you.’

On hearing the matter, Swami’s heart filled with kindness and he said, ‘do not be perplexed. What is better at home? You have got such Bhagawan. Though you could not get permission from home, you have become a saint abandoning all the things. Now what is there at home?’ Saying this, he put his hand on the head of that young saint and said, ‘now go, you will not remember home’.

As soon as Jogi Swami put his hand on the head of that saint, his mind became calm and stable. The disturbing thoughts disappeared. With the grace and blessings of Jogi Swami, that

devout young saint became a very good saint, became known as Purani Gnanswarupdasji, whose discourses give mental peace to thousands of people.

The thing, which could not be achieved with thousands of efforts, could easily be achieved with the grace of a great saint within a moment. As the sight of the God is miraculous, such is the sight of a great saint.

An Instant Cure

I had trouble in my throat. I was using it too much (for giving discourses). The throat is an asset of any saint.

I used to be tired while giving discourses and it also cause throat trouble. Despite resorting to Ayurvedic remedies, the same was not cured. Despite several remedial measures, the trouble could not be removed. Moreover, a small wart had developed in my vocal code. Dr. Vyas of Tata hospital in Mumbai performed an operation to remove that wart but this could not remove my throat trouble.

One day in the morning, I went to Jogi Swami for the Darshan. Swami was very kind and graceful to me naturally. In fact, I could sustain in the Satsang with the grace of Jogi Swami. Otherwise, what would be of this soul? It can not be imagined.

Swami said, “Oh! You have throat trouble, haven’t you?”

I said, “Yes, Swami.”

With kindness to me, Swami touched the Mala of Prasadi of Maharaj to my neck and said, “Now there will be no trouble. You can continue to give discourses on the God.”

Since then my throat trouble has completely gone. Though I have no sweet voice like Gnan Swami, yet with the grace of Jogi Swami, I have continued to give discourses and reading of Katha.

A Memorable Event

I had recently come from Banaras after completion of my study. As per routine programme, one day I was reading Vachanamrut before Jogi Swami. The subject of Vachanamrut was, 'The God can't be known through mind or speech. He is above all. None can catch Him with mind or speech or any other worldly means.' With the reading, the thoughts of Vedanta were arising in my mind. I was remembering the 'Shruti' like Neti Neti Neti. Mother Jasoda ran to catch Krishna but she could not. The 'Shrutis' of Vedas ran to catch Shree Hari but saying 'Neti Neti' they stopped. Shree Hari could not be caught.

Such thoughts were emerging in my mind. In the meanwhile, as if catching my thoughts, Swami asked, "Shastri can anybody catch Maharaj?"

I said, "Swami! can't catch."

Swami said, "Why?"

In reply, I started expressing my thoughts on Vedanta and started speaking Shrutis of Vedanta. As I had just completed my study, I was proud of my knowledge.

Swami said, "O clever saint! How can we understand such clever talks? However, we understand 'nobody is able to catch Maharaj'. Now, I am telling you, why Maharaj couldn't be caught by anybody."

Saying this Swami narrated a divine incident.

Once there was a celebration of *Patotsav* in Junagadh temple. Shastriji Maharaj prepared to proceed to Junagadh. He asked me, "Jogi, do you want to come?" However, as I had some fever in my body, I was unable to go. I said, "Swami, as I have fever, I am unable to come."

Shastriji Maharaj went to Junagadh and I stayed at Rajkot. But as I could not go for 'Patotsav', that thing was repeatedly emerging in my mind. With such remembrance, I tried to go to sleep but I could not. At last, I started to move Mala. I continued to move Mala up to early morning. I was sitting while moving Mala. In the meanwhile, there spread a brilliant light everywhere. Shreeji Maharaj came and stood before me and smiled at me.

With the Darshan of Maharaj, I became extremely glad. I saw in Sadhu Ashram where all the saints were sleeping. I thought, 'If these saints would be awakened, they also have the Darshan of Maharaj. Again, I thought I would detain Maharaj until the saints awake by catching the 'Khes' of Maharaj. I would request Maharaj to sit. Again I thought, I have not taken my bath yet, then how can I touch Maharaj? Again, I thought come what may, whether I have taken bath or not, I would hold the legs of Maharaj. I tried to hold the legs of Maharaj but immediately, as bird flies away, Maharaj disappeared in the sky like a flash.'

Concluding the talk Swami said, 'Shastri, since then I firmly believe that Maharaj could not be caught by anybody.'

How mysterious, protracted and deep talks of Vedanta! And how the experience of a simple and straightforward saint! We are living in indirect things while Jogi Swami is enjoying the perceptible divine joy.'

Guide of Vachanamrut

Whenever Jogi Swami did his 'Pooja', Vachanamrut was being read continuously. Swami started his 'Pooja' early in the morning and used to complete at ten in the morning. Until then one or other saint or Haribhakta continued to read Vachanamrut. Sometimes when Pujya Laxminarayan Swami or Mahendrabhai Shelat would write article for 'Sadvidya' and would need some guidance, he would come to Swami and ask, 'Swami, in which Vachanamrut this particular thing is discussed?' Swami would immediately give the number of Vachanamrut.

As such, Swami did not know to count up to hundred and did not know how to identify currency notes. Though he was not much literate, yet he had learned in 'Brahmvidya' (Spiritual knowledge) and was able to reply any question about Shikshapatri or Vachanamrut. If anybody would make mistake while reading 'Vachanamrut', Swami would immediately check him and would ask him to read it again. Thus, 'Vachanamrut' was interwoven with his life.

Protection of Cumin

It was year 1987. In the village Sarambhada of Amreli Dist, Rajnibhai Dhirubhai Gami had sown cumin in his two fields.

Jogi Swami arrived in Sarambhada from Ahmedabad in the car of Parshottambhai. He went to the farm of Dhirubhai for bath. After doing 'Abhishek' of Maharaj in the farm, Swami sat for a while. In the meantime Rajnibhai said, "Swami, in this

season the crop of cumin was very good but now-a-days it is affected by disease".

Swami said, "Oh! How has it happened? Let me sprinkle the water of 'Abhishek' of Maharaj." Jogi Swami sprinkled the water of 'Abhishek' on the standing crop of cumin in that field and said, "May Maharaj protect the crop!" 'The yield of that field was very good. In other fields of that village, the crop of cumin had almost failed. Moreover, the yield was more than that was yielded in our other farm, which was double in area.'

Stop Harassing the Innocent People

The village Bogharavadar is situated near Rajkot. There was no Satsangi in that village. Some children of Khodabhai, Muljibhai etc devout people of Bogharavadar came to study in Gurukul.

The virtues of children studying in Gurukul were creating a unique impression in the village and the society. On seeing this, great reverence was developed for Gurukul amongst the parents and the people of that village. They invited Purani Premprakashdasji etc. saints to Bogharavadar. Purani Swami came to this village and arranged a Satsang assembly. On listening to the talks of Purani Swami, many people initiated themselves into this Sampraday.

There was a great tyranny of Bharvad community in Bogharavadar. They used to spoil the standing crop in the fields of farmers by stealthily sending the cattle in the fields. They usurped certain portion of yield by bullying (by force) if anybody would deny, they would let loose their buffaloes to graze the cattle-feed sown in the field. Thus in many ways, they were oppressing the people, but nobody was able to complain.

Shamjibhai was the Sarpanch of the village. By caste, Shamjibhai was Koli and was brave by nature. He was favoured the farmers and also gave protection to them. So he was not at all liked by headstrong people. Once the Bharvads attacked Shamjibhai and broke his legs, yet he continued to challenge the headstrong people without fear. But the people of the village were afraid of the Bharvads, hence no one openly supported Shamjibhai. What can Shamjibhai do alone?

This is an unfortunate limitation of our villages. One or two headstrong persons can harass the entire village, yet the cowardly people of the village dare not challenge. If they oppose unitedly, the problem can be solved soon. When will the people of India get such courage? God knows.

The new Satsangis of Bogharavadar had come to Gurukul for the Darshan. They told Purani Swami about the tyranny of headstrong people in the village. Purani Swami sent them to Jogi Swami.

On hearing the talks of Haribhaktas, the heart of Jogi Swami filled with kindness.

Swami said, "Oh! Are they harassing you in such a way? and harassing the poor people? We shall come to Bogharavadar."

The devotees said, 'Swami, what will you do? Those people are not worthy to pursue.'

Swami said, 'Let us go there.'

With the grace of God, this totally fearless saint came to Bogharavadar. After arriving in Bogharavadar, Swami immediately called Bharvads to see. On the words of Swami, Bharvads came.

On doing 'Darshan' of Swami, no one knew what happened! The hearts of Bharvads started changing. They felt that this Swami is really a great saint! Swami started talking with these Bharvads in a simple and straightforward language.

"O people! if you harass the innocent persons, no one will protect you. If you accumulate your sins, you will have to go to the hell, where you will have to suffer a lot. If outlaws like Bhupat had also to run away, then who are you? Were your ancestors doing such dirty deeds? Stop oppressing the innocent people and do good job."

With the words of an experienced saint, the hearts of Bharvads were deeply touched. They started repenting. They feared that it is not good for them to displease a true saint. They bowed down to Swami and said, "Swami, henceforth we will not harass anybody. Your kindness! Please do not be displeased with us. We confess our faults."

Swami gave them the five vows and initiated them into the Sampraday. Due to the awe of a great saint, peace was established in Bogharavadar village.

As per the promise given to Swami, the Bharvads stopped their harassment to the people. Today the Bharvads and other people of Bogharavadar are very happy. All remember Swami with reverence.

The Secret of Words

As the followers of Swaminarayan Sampraday increased in the village Bogharavadar, Swami wished to create a temple there. With the inspiration of Jogi Swami, the construction work of the temple started. Mohanprasad Swami rendered good services in construction of temple in those days. Within a short

period, construction work was completed up to slab level. It was now time to fill up the ceiling with concrete mortar, but until then rainy season had started. The steel binding work of the ceiling was done but as the rain started, the village people started the work of sowing. The Haribhaktas, who were in the service work of construction of the temple, became anxious and upset. It was but natural because sowing means their matter of livelihood. However, if all the people serving for the temple go for sowing, then who would fill up the ceiling? The work of temple would remain incomplete.

Jogi Swami said to Haribhaktas, "You may stay here to complete the work of ceiling. If you would do sowing after two days, it would not be late. Maharaj will not let you to get any loss. In comparison to others, you will have a gain."

On the words of Swami, the faithful devotees, instead of going for the sowing, continued the work of ceiling of the temple. This type of sacrifice of small innocent devotees could be considered extra-ordinary. His livelihood of entire year depends on the sowing but faith on the saint was greater.

On one side, the devotees did the work to fill up the ceiling and on the other side, other farmers of the village did the work of sowing. Many village people were laughing at the foolishness of the devotees and were saying, "On the words of an ascetic, they all will be ruined". But no one knew about the unpredictable nature.

The first rain occurred but it was not sufficient for the sowing. The soil was not fully wet. But people could not bear patience. They completed the work of sowing but further round of rain delayed and wind started blowing which dried up the sown crop and the seeds were wasted.

The Haribhaktas engaged in the service work of the temple, knowing the changed attribute of the rainy season, decided not to sow in haste now. Let it be as per the will of Shree Hari. Believing this, they postponed sowing. They saved the seeds. After some time good rain occurred and then they did the sowing in their fields. The God gave them good yield. The people who were saying that, 'on the words of an ascetic, the devotees will be ruined,' now were surprised and started saying, 'The devotees gained on the words of a saint and our seeds and labour both have gone in vain.'

'In relation to others, you will be benefitted', these words of Jogi Swami came absolutely true. If the hidden meaning of the words of a great saint could be understood and believed, the soul could achieve its goal.

May God Protect You

It was good rainfall this year. The earth was covered with greenery. The fields were full of green crops.

Due to the good rainfall, the minds of the people were full of joy. However, near Rajkot, in Raj Samadhiyala, the picture was different. The fields were green but the minds of the farmers were dejected. The sighs of grief were emanating from their hearts.

The farmers had ploughed their fields with severe labour. The costly seeds were sown with joy but their dreams of good fortune were being shattered.

The fact was that, in their presence, the headstrong people were letting loose their cattle to graze in their green fields. The farmers were much afraid and helpless. The standing crops in the fields, their livelihood of entire year, and their good hopes

were being crushed and ruined before their eyes and yet they were unable to utter a single word. The rays of the sun of independence had not yet reached there. The darkness of helplessness had spread everywhere in the village Raj Samadhiyala. The people, who were destroying the standing crop of farmers, were so notorious and wicked that no one was able to give their names. There was no end of the sufferings of the people.

The sufferings and the sighs of the people scorched the heart of a Rajput woman, Gajara Ba. She was unable to see the sufferings of the people of her village. She was constantly thinking, what to do?

One day the situation reached its climax. When the oppression of the headstrong people increased beyond limit, some farmers complained to the police.

Due to the complaint of the farmers, the headstrong people became furious and they decided to teach a lesson to the farmers who had complained to the police.

The farmers also had feared that the police would remain at Rajkot and here something new would surely happen.

One day the complainant farmer, with his three sons, was working in his field. At that time those headstrong people in the group of fifteen, attacked that family. "Kill them, kill them", uttering the words they rushed to the farmer and his family. The farmer with his sons ran away to save lives and they hid themselves in the 'Machine room' and closed the door from inside. Anyhow, one son escaped and ran to the village and he made a loud scream, 'save us, save us, those monsters would kill us'.

It was noon. The sky was covered with clouds. There were shoutings in the village. At that very time, the two young sons of Gajara Ba, Hardevsinhji and Haritsinhji were preparing to take meal. Hardevsinhji was 19 years old and Haritsinhji was 17 years old. Both brothers were like Lions. The royal glow was on their faces. The mother Gajaraba was preparing the dish for her beloved sons. Royal '*Bajoths*' were placed. As they were about to sit to dine, they heard the fearful screams. Hardevsinh came out of his house. That boy told about the happening-taking place at their farmhouse and requested, "Bapu! save us. If any delay would occur, they will kill our entire family." On hearing this, within a moment, Hardevsinh took decision. He hurriedly rushed in the house.

Mother Gajaraba asked, "Hardev! what is the matter?"

Hardevsinh told her about the incident, which was taking place at the farm.

Gajaraba said, "Oh my son! I am also waiting to punish those headstrong people. I cannot see the sufferings of the people. If you remove the pains of the people, then only you are my true sons. The royal women give birth to sons to protect the religion, cows, Brahmins and poor people. Go immediately, there is no time to talk. Save that family, then only I will have peace." The sharp words of mother inspired a force in their hearts.

Hardevsinh in a moment took the rifle hanging on the wall. Haritsinh also took arms and both reached the farm.

Here at the farm, at every moment, the situation was becoming grave. The family, taking refuge in the machine room, was shivering like a deer encircled by wild animals. The people like devils had encircled the machine room. Fortunately, the door of the machine room was strong. Despite great efforts of the headstrong people, they could not open the door.

At last, one monster took an axe in his hand and started giving strokes on the door. With every stroke of axe, the family inside saw death coming nearer. When the door was about to break down, both the Rajput brothers reached the farm. Hardevsinh assessed the situation from far and roared like a lion. He shouted, "Beware,"

With that sudden shout, the crowd became stunned. The person striking with the axe stopped for a while. As they turned their faces to see the man challenging them, they saw two brothers like their death. Before the crowd of monsters could think, Hardevsinh fired a shot from his rifle and like a flash, the leader of monsters was hit and fell down. As the other monsters saw their leader falling down, they ran away. With a jump, Hardevsinh climbed on the ceiling of the machine room and took his position. Other front was taken over by Haritsinh. Hardevsinh shouted, "Beware, if anybody comes near, I will shoot him dead."

On seeing deadly Darbars, the crowd lost its courage and leaving behind their leader dead, they started running away.

As the crowd fled away, Hardevsinh encouraged the farmer's family to come out of the machine room. The eyes of the farmer's family were shedding tears. They were not able to speak. They were giving blessings to both the brothers.

The farmer bowed down to Hardevsinh and said, "We will not forget your obligation for the entire life."

Hardevsinh said, "Thank God that we got the information in time".

Hardevsinh started thinking that I have killed the leader of the monsters but now there will be a police case. Now, what to do?

Hardevsinh remembered his Guru Jogi Swami. He thought to reach the shelter of Jogi Swami to get the protection.

Hardevsinh was a student of Gurukul. He had a deep love for Jogi Swami. Swami also called him frequently to read Vachanamrut. Swami was everything for Hardevsinh.

Hardevsinh directly came to Rajkot. Jogi Swami was moving Mala in the verandah of Sadhu Ashram. Hardevsinh did the 'Dandvat Pranam' and sat nearby.

Swami said, "Oh Hardev, why have you come?"

Darbar said, "Swami, I have committed a mistake."

Swami asked, "What mistake have you committed?"

Darbar said, "Swami, I have killed one person."

Swami said, "Oh! After killing a man, you have come to me? How can one kill a person? It is a big sin."

Darbar said, "Swami, that person was very headstrong. Today if I would not have reached there, he would have killed entire farmer family. That fellow was harassing the farmers very much. He used to let loose his cattle in the standing crop in farms. The police was also not doing anything to him."

When Swami heard the talk of harassment to innocent farmers, his heart became soft.

Swami said, "Darbar! if it was so then go, Maharaj will protect you. You will not be hurt at all." The words of blessings came out from Swami's mouth like an armour.

Really, with the blessings of Swami, Hardevsinh did not suffer even a little. Criminal case was filed by the police but that farmer family confessed that the crime was done by themselves. During the identification parade, nobody could recognise Hardevsinh. The blessings of Swami protected

Hardevsinh like an armour. On the point of self-defence, the farmer family also acquitted. The govt. officers also knew about the criminal activities of that headstrong person. Therefore, they felt themselves relieved of a criminal. In fact, Hardevsinh deserved for praise for freeing the innocent people from a tyranny of monsters.

Even, today when Hardevsinh remembers that incident, he says, “Due to the blessings of Swami, I was protected and today my brilliant career is due to the blessings of Jogi Swami. I was selected as Dy. S.P. but due to that chapter, I could not report. My life took an unbelievable turn. I joined politics and today whatever progress, I have made is due to the blessings of my Guru Jogi Swami.’

In his young age, this fearless, adventurous and intelligent Darbar has done many benevolent works for the people. Hardevsinh has made his village Raj Samadhiyala an ideal village of India. In the matter of cleanliness and water conservation, he has made this village world famous. He has constructed as many as 51 check-dams in this small village. As a result of it, the water level has come up miraculously in this village. The village is surrounded by green trees; no filth, and no garbage. This neat and clean village seems to be an area of heaven.

Once Hardevsinh invited us to visit Raj Samadhiyala. While moving in the village, we went into the area of Harijan people. We were surprised to see their houses neat and clean. In the compound of every house, there were trees, flower plants and ‘Tulsi’ shrubs. No filth could be seen anywhere.

We told Hardevsinh that the soul of Mahatma Gandhi would be pleased to see the Harijan-vas of your village.

Hardevsinh said, “This is all due to the blessings of our Guru Jogi Swami. Swami diverted my strength to the right path. Otherwise, I was a notorious man. Swami! To make this village a progressive one, only Govt. measures cannot work. Sometimes I use my ruler-ship also. Otherwise people would not observe the rules”.

We said, “Darbar! There is no harm in using constructive Bapushahi, but it can’t be used to harass the people.”

Hardevsinh always gives credit to Pujya Jogi Swami for the brilliant success he has achieved.

Bestowment of Son

There is a village namely Virva in Lodhika Taluka. Shree Juvansinhji was a Darbar of that village, virtuous as his name was. In his old age also, he looked like a young man having thin body with full height. He was a noble person and economically very happy. He had one son namely Batukbhai.

Darbar Juvansinhji was happy in every way but his son Batukbhai had no son.

Once Jogi Swami was in Makhavad to renovate the temple. Darbar Juvansinhji and Sarbapu of Makhavad both were close friends. Sarbapu was like an ideal of reverence towards the saints. For Sarbapu saint meant the God Himself.

Once Sarbapu told Juvansinhji, “Darbar, you have no grandson. If you pray to Jogi Swami, you may have a grandson. Swami is a very capable and pious saint”.

On the other hand, Sarbapu told Swami, “Swami, be kind to Virva Darbar. Virva Darbar is a good man but his son has no son. You may please pray to Maharaj to give him a son”.

Swami said, "Ok, we will pray to Maharaj."

As the renovation work of the temple at Makhavad was going on, once Swami was going to Makhavad. The request made by Sarbapu was in the mind of Swami. Swami told the driver to divert the car to Virva and said, "We want to see Virva Darbar."

Four to five saints including Shreehari Swami and me were with Swami. Jogi Swami arrived at the house of Virva Darbar.

As the Swami arrived at his own will, Darbar became very glad. Really, Darbar Juvansinhji would be a sacred soul as Swami arrived at his house at his own will.

Harijanne Gher Betha Tirath

Un-tedya samethi Aave re

Meaning: The saint comes to the house of a true devotee even without invitation.

Darbar Juvansinhji had heard much about Jogi Swami. He had great reverence in his heart for Jogi Swami but he had never met him so far.

Jogi Swami sat for a while in Darbargadh.

The Women from the Darbargadh also conveyed to request Swami for showing kindness on their family, so that their son can get a son.'

Swami said, "Darbar, we have heard from Sarbapu that you have no grandson. With folded hands, Juvansinhji said, "Yes Swami, the God has made us quite happy but as my son has no son. All we feel unhappiness".

Swami said, "Darbar, we are renovating the temple at Makhavad. In Makhavad temple, Hanumanji Maharaj is very

capable. You may prepare dresses for the Murti of Hanumanji, means you may get the temple of Hanumanji renovated with colour work and painting work. Shree Hari will give a son to your son."

Juvansinhji said, "Swami, I will do as you please."

Swami said, "Ok! Then Swaminarayan Bhagawan will fulfill your desire."

Darbar Juvansinhji arranged for the renovation and colour work of Hanumanji Maharaj and served in the Makhavad temple at the will of Jogi Swami.

With the grace of Shree Hari and Jogi Swami, Batukbhai got a son, who was dearly named as Lalbha.

Unique faith developed in the heart of Juvansinhji for Jogi Swami. He then used to come for the Darshan of Swami frequently. Whenever Swami happened to arrive in Dholara, Makhavad, Khambha or in nearby villages and arrange to celebrate religious events, Darbar Juvansinhji invariably took part in the same on the words of Swami. He also contributed for the celebrations.

It is believed that if anyone wishes something while being under 'Kalpavruksha' it comes true, but 'Kalpavruksha' does not come to us at its will. One has to sit under the 'Kalpavruksha' But the saints like Jogi Swami, are moving 'Kalpavruksha'. For the benevolence of the souls, they constantly move. They go to the soul at their own and award well-being to the souls.

Aeva Jo malya re amane Jogiya

Jogi Jone Kalpataru kahevay

Fale re Manorath sarve Jivna

Bhetye Bhav-Dookh Jay

(Meaning):

We have got such a saint

Who is like a Kalpavruksha

Who fulfils the wish of all souls

And who relieves from the pain of rebirth

Resurrection of New Life

Certain villages have got the benefit of shower of kindness of Jogi Swami. Amongst those villages, village Makhavad near Rajkot is the foremost. It is a small and beautiful village. The Darbars and farmers of this village are good followers of Satsang.

Earlier the Darbars (Rulers) of this area had come out in search of God. They met Sadguru Gunatitanand Swami. Due to the talks of Gunatitanand Swami, they came to know about Shree Hari and a firm faith was developed in their hearts. A beautiful temple of Bhagawan Swaminarayan was constructed in the village. With the passing of time, this temple became quite dilapidated. It was renovated with the inspiration of Jogi Swami.

After completion of renovation of this temple, a big ceremony was celebrated with great joy. Katha (discourses) of Shreemad Bhagawat (a Hindu Religious Scripture) was arranged. Purani Gnanswarupdasji and I were reading Shreemad Bhagawat. While reading it, on the very first day, the story of Birth of Parixit came. With a stroke of Astra (one kind of weapon controlled by Mantra, missile) by Ashwasthama, the body of Parixit had become lifeless in the womb of Uttara. Uttara was weeping extremely. The lamp of the Pandwas' lineage was blown up. All were stunned. The Pandwas were

submerged in the sea of melancholy. At that time Bhagawan Shree Krishna, the ocean of compassion, took three vows to infuse life in the dead body of Parixit. All the three vows were really incredible!

Shree Krishna took first vow, 'Despite Playing 'Raas' with Gopis, if I have maintained complete celibacy, may 'Parixit' get new life!'

Shree Krishna's second vow was, 'Even while jesting if I have not spoken an untruth, may 'Parixit get new life!'

Shree Krishna's third vow was, 'Even on the death of enemy, if I have not felt love or hate in my heart, may 'Parixit' get new life!'

If we see the life of Shree Krishna, these three vows appear to be totally contradictory and unbelievable for us. However, with the uttering of these three vows by Shree Krishna, a miracle happened. Pervasion of life happened into the dead body of Parixit. The people could know how great and mysterious Shree Krishna was!

On the first day of reading of Shreemad Bhagawat Katha, the 'Katha' of above incident was concluded in the evening. By leaving the 'Vyaspith' (seat of the Katha-reader), we were going to our 'Aasana' (pace to stay) in the temple. In the meanwhile, a leading young 'Darbar' Mokubha of the village met us. His younger son was with him. He said, "Swami, you have, today, read the Katha of Parixit but this is my younger son. He is a living example of Parixit".

I asked, "How it is?"

Darbar Mokubha said, "Swami, I had no child. Jogi Swami showered his compassion on me. Once Swami gave water of Prasadi after dipping Shree Hari's armour in it and

gave me the vow of Hari Jayanti. On the words of Jogi Swami and with the grace of Shreeji Maharaj, I got a son that is my elder son.

"Thereafter this second son was born in a hospital at Rajkot. After birth, three to four hours passed but there was no life in the body of the child.

"The doctor said to me, Darbar, now there is no hope for resurrection of this child."

"I had also no hope. I gave Rs. 500 to the doctor for the funeral. The child was placed in the basket."

"On the other hand my friend, Rajubhai Dave came to know this. He came out to reach to the hospital. He thought that before going to the Hospital, let me have the Darshan of Jogi Swami."

"It was eight or nine o'clock in the morning. Jogi Swami was doing his 'Pooja'"

"On seeing Rajubhai, Swami asked, Oh, you come late daily, why have you come so early today?"

"Rajubhai told everything about the happening at the Hospital."

"Swami closed his eyes for some time and then said, it would not be so. Go to the Hospital immediately. Take this water offered to the God. Sprinkle this on the body of the child. After opening the mouth of the child, pour some water into it also. Maharaj will do well. Saying this Swami dipped the Mala of Shreeji Maharaj into the water and gave that water to Rajubhai."

"Rajubhai hurriedly reached the hospital. There was no life in the body of the child and the preparation for the last ritual was going on."

"Rajubhai told me everything and gave me the water given by Swami. I sprinkled that water on the body of the child and put some drops into the mouth of that child as Jogi Swami has said."

"Suddenly a divine miracle happened. With the grace of Shree Hari and Jogi Swami, life pervaded into the body of the child. All were wondered to see this. For the mother of that child, as if she had got new life. A wave of joy was spread in the entire family. The doctor was also surprised to see this miracle. With the grace of Shreeji Maharaj and Jogi Swami, my dead son resurrected."

Concluding the talk Mokubha said, 'this is my 'Parixit'. My elder son is born by the water of an armour, hence he is as strong as armour. This younger son has also got new life with the water of 'Prasadi'.

Maharaj Has Sent to Take Care

Eva Jo malya re amane Jogiya

Haiye Jene Harivar no Jog

Akhand Rahe Hari Antare

Pal Bhar no'y re vijog.

Meaning: We have got such a saint in whose heart, Shree Hari resides constantly and there is no separation even for a moment.

If Shree Hari resides in our hearts, it is not sufficient. Fortunate he is who lives in the heart of Shree Hari.

If we remember Shree Hari, it is good but fortunate is one, who is remembered by Shree Hari Himself.

It is good to have love for Shree Hari in our heart, but fortunate he is, upon whom Shree Hari Himself showers love.

Our love is unfulfilled until it is accepted by Shree Hari.

Jogi Swami is such a saint in whose heart, Shree Hari resides forever and he lives in the heart of Shree Hari. It is proved by innumerable incidents of his life. Many a times, Shree Hari has taken care of Swami.

Once Swami started experiencing trouble in passing urine. Reputed doctors said that the same was due to prostate. The pain can be removed by operation. However, Swami never agreed to go to the Hospital. Except Ayurvedic medicine, no other medicine would suit him. The doctors and saints requested much, yet he did not agree.

The famous doctor of Rajkot Dr. Rathod has much love and reverence for the saints. Particularly, he had boundless love for Jogi Swami. He was employed at Railway Hospital. He requested Swami, 'Swami, please accept our request. I may arrange in Railway Hospital as you wish and will maintain your religious observances. So please give your consent for the operation gladly.'

At last, the insistence of Doctor and the saints and devotees succeeded. Jogi Swami consented. Swami was admitted to the Hospital.

Dr. Rathod, by maintaining all the restraints, performed the operation with reverence. The operation was successful.

As such, the body of Swami was totally healthy due to the observance of various vows (Samyam-Niyam) and penance. Even in his old age, he has no complications like Diabetes or Blood pressure.

Swami stayed at Railway Hospital for three days but during this period, he took liquid food only. He did not even speak.

One day, when he was to be discharged from the hospital, suddenly Swami started weeping. The saints in the service of Swami were worried to see him weeping. Shree Hari Swami and other saints asked repeatedly, "Swami, what is the matter?" However, Swami did not reply and continued weeping.

The saints thought, 'what could be happening to Swami? Is it due to pain of operation? Or else, is he would be displeased as he was brought to the hospital against his will?'

As Swami continued his weeping, all the saints became dejected. They also had tears in their eyes. Seeing the saints weeping, Swami stopped weeping.

The saints asked, "Swami, please tell what you feel? Do you feel pain? Or are you displeased with us?"

Swami said, "No. I have no pain, nor I am displeased with you. See upward, so many saints sent by Maharaj are sitting in the air without support. Gunatitanand Swami, Gopalanand Swami and many other saints are constantly standing for the last three days. They are constantly taking care of me. I am shedding tears of joy with the Darshan of these saints."

The saints became happy and surprised to hear the talk of Swami about his divine experience. Thereafter Swami returned to Gurukul and his health became normal.

Once Swami was sitting happily. Remembering that incident of hospital, he said, "Shastri, a day before operation, it was Monday night. On that night, as Swans descend from the sky, the saints descended from the sky. I felt extreme joy in my

heart. I thought that a very good thing had happened. Many saints had come. The saints stayed there until I was in the hospital. I asked why you have come. They said, "Maharaj has sent us to take care of you."

"Shastri! I thought that though I have not performed much Jap and penance, yet how Maharaj takes care of me!" With such a thought, I had tears of joy. Seeing me weeping, the saints thought that I was weeping due to the pain. I did not weep due to the pain in my body. I burst into tears of joy to see the grace of Maharaj and saints for me."

Shower of Compassion

Saurashtra is an area of water scarcity since long. Moreover, consecutive droughts break the back of economy of the people.

The years 1985-86 were the years of scarcity. The next year (1987) there was a dangerous famine. In that difficult time, it was difficult to sustain the life of human beings and the cattle. Particularly, the situation of Jamnagar area was extremely difficult and sorrowful.

The farmers had no water in their wells and the people had no food grains.

There is a village namely Vajir Khakhariya in that area. A straightforward, innocent and noble man lived in that village. His name was Popatbapa Mendapara. Popatbapa's son Bhavan was studying in Gurukul. Bhavan had great love for Jogi Swami. He sat daily before Swami and read Vachanamrut. Swami was also graceful towards Bhavan.

In the difficult days of famine, situation of Popatbapa became very difficult. The grains exhausted at home and cattle-feed grass too exhausted. The maintenance of human being and cattle became very difficult. Popatbapa had two Kankrej (a race of cow) cows. He sent those cows to Kalubhai Korat living in Samadhiyala village of Una Taluka for subsistence.

Popatbapa had dearly maintained a pair of bullocks, like his dear sons. However, now there was no fodder to give them. He was much confused but he thought, 'I don't want to give these bullocks to some economically weaker farmer even if he offers good amount. Even at a lesser price, I would give these bullocks to an economically sound farmer who can maintain them.'

At last with afflicted heart, the pair of bullocks, whose normal price was Rs.15,000/-, was sold to a well to do farmer of village Balapar of Jam Kandorna Taluka for Rs. 1500/- only.

After selling out his dear bullocks, Popatbapa came to Rajkot Gurukul for the Darshan of Jogi Swami. Popatbapa's family did not follow Swaminarayan Sampraday but as Bhawan was studying in the Gurukul, love towards the Sampraday had developed in him. As Bhawan talked about the glory of Jogi Swami, a great reverence and faith towards him was developed in his heart.

While he came to Rajkot Gurukul for the Darshan of Jogi Swami, a thought emerged in his mind, 'If Swami gives consent, I may go for digging of a bore-well.' Due to the famine the possibility of water was less, yet if Swami would bless, there would be some water in the bore-well and would ease the drought situation to some extent. Again he thought, 'I am not to tell my own problem to such a God - like saint.'

He bowed down to Jogi Swami and sat before him. With the inspiration of Shree Hari, Jogi Swami asked him:

“What about the maintenance of your family?”

Even in the difficult time, the heart of Popatbapa was full of restraint. The family was large and in the storeroom, there was only a bag of food grain. Yet he thought that he would not tell it to Swami because Swami is very kind and in view of my situation, if he would tell me to take food grain from Gurukul, it will be an awkward position for me because I don't want to take charity.'

Thinking in this way Popatbapa said to Swami; “Swami, it is good due to the kindness of the God and yourself”.

Again, Swami said, “Tell me the truth as it is.”

At last, Popatbapa told about the situation, as it was “Swami, the family is big and the food-grain has exhausted.”

On hearing this, Swami stood up, went to the Murti of Maharaj sitting on the throne in Sadhu Ashram and prayed to Maharaj. After some time Swami came to Popatbapa and said, “Is there any well at your farm?”

Popatbapa said, “Yes, Swami.”

Swami said, “With the remembrance of Maharaj, you may dig a bore-well near the well, the God will give you water.”

Popatbapa said, “Ok Swami.”

Swami said, “But how will you arrange for a bore-well? Have you money?”

Popatbapa said, “Swami, I have no money, but I will borrow money for bore-well.”

In the meanwhile, a Haribhakta came for the Darshan of Swami. Swami told that Haribhakta “Give him money to dig a bore-well, he will return your money.” On the order of Swami, that Haribhakta gave money to Popatbapa for digging a bore-well.

Popatbapa arranged for the digging of a bore-well. Plentiful water came in the bore-well. On 17-11-1987, he set an electric Motor and with the grace of Bhagawan Shree Hari and Jogi Swami, until the date much water was received from that bore-well

In the very first year, he received good yield of cumin. He got the income of Rs. 70,000/-. Popatbapa returned the borrowed money to that Haribhakta. The entire family became happy day by day.

Once Popatbapa came to Rajkot and requested Swami, “Swami, with your grace, there is much water in the bore-well and we have become happy in every way but you may please be kind to come to Vajir Khakhariya to give us more happiness.”

Swami said, “We will surely come at our convenience.”

In the year 1989, November-December, Swami came to Vajir Khakhariya village alongwith a group of saints. Popatbapa, his family and the village people became very happy with the Darshan of Swami. Swami talked much about the glory of Maharaj and Satsang. With the company of Swami, many devout became the followers of Swaminarayan Sampraday.

Improve the end of your life

Popatbapa had one elder brother. His name was Polabhai. He smoked much and by nature, he was hot-tempered.

To make people to do Bhajan, to inspire them to give up their addictions and to make them happy economically is an innate nature of Swami. Wherever he would go, he would make the people to do Dhoon-Bhajan and would inspire the people to give up their addictions.

Swami said, "Polabhai, now you have little time to live. Do you want to have better end to your life?"

With the words of Swami, Polabhai became overwhelmed with joy. With folded hands he said, 'Swami, I will do as you wish.'

Swami said, "Give up smoking."

At the order of Swami, Polabhai gave up smoking and *Gutka*. He put *beedies* and matchbox at the feet of Swami and said, "Swami, from today you are my preceptor (Guru) and I am to act as you wish."

Swami initiated him in the Sampraday by giving him five vows.

After seven or eight months, on 6-August-90 an extraordinary incident happened. Polabhai had one mare. The mare was very powerful and was having good understanding. Though being an animal, it had a love for his boss like a human being.

Polabhai had gone to Kalavad side riding on that mare. While returning to Vajir Khakhariya, on the way he died while

he was sitting on the mare. The dead body slipped down to the earth.

On seeing the boss fall down, the mare stopped. The faithful animal understood the matter. The mare of high pedigree took scarf of Polabhai in her mouth and reached village Sanala. As soon as the village people saw, they recognised. "Oh, this is a mare of Polabhai Mendapara! But, why is she alone? And why a scarf is in her mouth? Surely some unhappy incident has happened."

The people stopped the mare and made her to return. The mare walked ahead and the people followed it.

At some distance, she stopped where the dead body of Polabhai was lying on the road.

The people arranged to send the dead body to village Vajir Khakhariya. The family members and the village people performed the funeral.

Popatbhai remembered the words of Swami told to his brother Polabhai, "Now little life for you to live, improve the end of your life."

When Swami got the news of the death of Polabhai, Swami said, "Polabhai was a devout of earlier birth. Almost in ending part of his life, he came into our contact. He initiated himself in our Sampraday and remained in our command and also gave up addictions. Hence, Shreeji Maharaj showered His grace upon him and took his soul to His abode very easily. With our words, he improved the end of his life."

On the words of Swami, Polabhai purified himself and went to the abode of Shree Hari.

'O Maharaj ! Please Protect the Saint'

There was a well behind the big kitchen of Gurukul. The well was dangerous and deep. In the summer, the water would be at great depth. In the rainy season, the level would come up. As, in the good or bad company our 'Satsang' would go up or down, the same thing was happening to the well.

In the year with good rainfall, the water of this well would be sufficient for the kitchen and the hostel but in the summer, the water level would touch the bottom. Once, as it was a year of famine, the water in the well was almost at the bottom.

There was a young saint in Gurukul. Though he was young, he was adventurous by nature. He took care of the wells and the water tanks.

It was a month of Jyestha. There was a terrible heat. The rainy season was nearing. The young saint thought to see the condition of the well and to shift the motor on an upwards platform.

The saint took a student with him. The name of the student was Tulsi. One other Parshad, who had come from Surat to initiate himself into saintliness, also went with him. All the three went to the edge of the well. They peeped into the well. The water was at great depth. There were rocky stones on the walls of the well. There were holes in the rocky stones. There were three platforms made of iron girders to install motor and galvanised pipes for lifting of water therein. The condition of the well was really dreadful.

The saint was not satisfied with the observation. He tied a rope at the edge of the well. With the help of the rope, he and

'O Maharaj! Please Protect The Saint'

Tulsi descended to the bottom of the well. They saw that the water was only four to five feet deep but there was sandy earth at the bottom with many stones. On the upper level of the well, a concrete ceiling was created hence its iron and other building materials had also fallen to the bottom of the well. Moreover, the big kitchen of the Hostel was near the well. Some notorious cooks might have dropped big vessels meant for preparing the dough in it and the same also could be seen in the water. All these rusted materials were lying in the pit five feet deep.

That service oriented saint thought, 'Still the rain is some days away (the rainy season is yet to start after few days) meanwhile if this garbage scrap is cleaned, it would be good'. Thus, Tulsi and that saint decided to clean the well and thereafter that saint climbed up with the help of the rope.

Tulsi was sitting on the girder. He thought that when the saint reaches the edge of the well with the help of that rope, he would also reach to the edge of the well.

The saint reached the edge of the well. Bhagawan Bhagat, who was standing at the edge of the well, caught the hand of the saint but suddenly he felt giddiness and became unsteady. He started shivering.

The saint said, "O Bhagat! Why are you shivering? See that you do not give up my hand."

Before Bhagat could say anything, the saint left the rope relying on the support of Bhagat and an unexpected accident happened. The hand of Bhagat, shivering with fear and wet with the sweat, disjoined and the saint fell down into the well. Bhagat screamed. Tulsi who was sitting on girder inside the well also was shocked with fear. While falling down into the well, the only word came out of the saint's mouth loudly was 'Swaminarayan'.

On hearing the scream of Bhagat and the sound of someone falling into the well, the cooks came running. Kothari Swami Harjivandasji also came hurriedly. By chance, Kanubhagat was also present. He also came swiftly. Within few minutes, a crowd of saints and devotees gathered near the well. As the well was deep and full of girders, rubbles and stones, there was no hope of survival of the saint. All the saints and Haribhaktas started remembering Shree Hari.

It was a time to awake the God. Jogi Swami was moving Mala behind the Sadhu Ashram under an almond tree. Someone came there in haste and said, 'Swami, the little saint has fallen down into the well behind the kitchen'.

On hearing about this dangerous accident stet, Swami started uttering, "Swaminarayan, Swaminarayan".

Swami prayed to Maharaj, 'Maharaj! may you protect your saint. If he is injured or dead, your credit would be lost. The people will criticise you.'

However, what happened in the well? As the hand of the saint was released from the hand of Bhagat, the God Himself caught the hand of the saint. The saint felt that the compassionate Murti of Shree Hari by stretching His hand caught him and thereafter he became unconscious.

The saint fell in the water before the eyes of Tulsi. Tulsi was frightened, yet courageously he lifted the saint and placed him on the girder, on which he himself was sitting. Tulsi started weeping. While weeping, Tulsi was moving his hand on the back of the saint.

The saint was almost unconscious and was unable to speak. Here on the edge of the well, Kothari Swami immediately made available a small cot. He tied ropes to the coat and made

two volunteers to descend into the well. The volunteers took the saint on the small cot and brought him out of the well. Meanwhile the saint regained consciousness.

Where there was no possibility of survival, the saint had no visible injury at all. As Shree Hari had protected Prahlad, he had also protected the young saint that day. As if the words of Jogi Swami, "O Maharaj, may you protect the saint" were duly heard by Shree Hari.

On seeing the saint unhurt, all were relaxed. The saint was brought to the Sadhu Ashram on the little cot itself. Meanwhile Jogi Swami also came there. He fondled with his hand over the body of that young saint and said, 'The Maharaj has protected you. Shree Hari has given you a new life. Now do more devotion and service of Maharaj but be careful while doing adventures.'

Kanu Bhagat took that saint to the hospital soon. The doctors examined the saint carefully and said, "Only knocking injury is there. There are some scratches on the skin but no fracture anywhere in the body." After primary treatment, the doctors allowed him to go.

Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj was also in Rajkot Gurukul when that incident happened. Shastriji Maharaj came to the young saint to give him Darshan and saw him with compassion. The compassionate sight worked like a miraculous medicine, which pervaded new life in the body of that young saint.

That saint means our Nilkanthdasji. Nilkanth Swami is straightforward and innocent by nature. With service activity, he is doing Bhajan as well. Earlier he served in water supply department and construction work also. At present, he is serving in the construction work at Chharodi Gurukul. With supervision work, he also tells the labourers about the glory of Maharaj and

Satsang, makes them to do *Mantra-Lekhan* and diverts them to the path leading to Shreeji Maharaj.

Cured a Buffalo

Village Khirsara is situated near Rajkot. Bhagawan Swaminarayan had visited this village and had lodged in the courtyard of this village. There are some Haribhakta families living in this village. Amongst them, some are of Darbar community. Jogi Swami frequently comes here to strengthen the Satsang.

Khirsara Darbar Shree Samatsinhji Jasubha Jadeja, his brother Jayubhai and their entire family are specially graced by Jogi Swami. Samatsinhji Bapu served as a high official in S.T. Nigam. Jayubhai took care of farming.

Samatsinhji could not do without the Darshan of Swami even for a day. He regularly came for the Darshan of Swami and sat near Swami. Swami also remembered him frequently and also called him.

Darbar Samatsinhji used to invite Jogi Swami along with group of saints to Khirsara twice or thrice in a year. Sometimes in winter, there would be festival of 'Ponk' (green roasted wheat). Sometimes there would be festival of sugar-cane. Sometimes in the month of Bhadrapad or Aaso there would 'Ola' (roasted green ground-nut) festival.

The nature of Samatsinhjibapu was extremely simple. He had unshakable faith in Jogi Swami. He would do, as Swami would say. He had one divine experience of Jogi Swami. Let us see his experience in his own words. Darbar Samatsinhji used to address Jogi Swami as 'Jogi Bapa'. Therefore, the same word is used here.

Samatsinhjibapu said, "On the inspiration and command of Jogi Bapa, *Katha-Parayan* of Shreemad Bhagwat Saptah was arranged in Chaitra month of Samvat year 2043 i.e. from 16-04-87 to 22-04-87. During this period, Jogi Bapa stayed at a farm near our village. One day our Buffalo became sick due to taking some food or otherwise, none could know. The buffalo was lying down on the earth. Its belly was swelling, and eyes widened. Seeing had the symptoms, it was apparent that it would die. The buffalo was a big one and gave good amount of milk. We tried some local treatment but the situation did not improve. Hence, it was but natural that everybody in the family became worried.

I was also unable to sleep, hence every now and then I went to see the buffalo. In the meanwhile, Jogi Bapa woke up and asked me, 'Oh! Why are you going and coming back frequently?' Therefore, I told him about the buffalo's health.

Bapa said, "Take a torch and a little pot of water and come with me."

It was a dark night. The stars were twinkling in the sky. Gentle breeze was blowing. The buffalo was lying on the earth helplessly.

Jogi Bapa came with me where the buffalo was lying. He walked around the buffalo and sprinkled water and then said, "Now you go, don't worry. Maharaj will cure your buffalo. Now go to sleep without any worry."

Thereafter, Jogi Bapa awakened me at four O'clock in the early morning and said, 'Go and see what that buffalo is doing.

I went to see the buffalo. I saw that buffalo was easily ruminating. I returned and told to Jogi Bapa that buffalo was well and was ruminating.

Bapa immediately said, "This Bhagawan is drinking the milk of your buffalo. When he is here and we are also here, if anything happened to your buffalo, He and we also could lose our credit. Can he drink the milk of your buffalo free of cost? He has protected your buffalo. Now don't worry."

The reading of Shreemad Bhagawat Katha was concluded. On the previous day, Jogi Bapa and the saints were sitting at the farm. With folded hands, I told Bapa, 'Bapa, tomorrow you will all take leave. We will feel emptiness.'

Bapa said, "What do you say?" Then raising his hand, he said, 'With the grace of Maharaj, this place would not remain empty. It will remain full. In your house, the milk, curd and butter will never exhaust.'

Since then, the house at the farm always remained full with the food grain, pulses and at home the milk, curd and butter never exhausted.

Darbar Samatsinhji told us about his second experience. This incident happened a day before Pujya Shastriji Maharaj went to Akshardham (Abode of Shreeji Maharaj).

On that day, I had gone for the Darshan of Swami at 8:30 pm. Jogi Bapa was sitting on the outer platform of the assembly hall and was moving Mala. I did the Darshan of Bapa.

Jogi Bapa said, "Darbar, Shastriji Maharaj has returned from Mumbai. You may go for his Darshan and ask him about his health."

I said, "Bapa, now Swami must be resting and he should not be disturbed".

Bapa said, "You may go and see, if he is taking rest, you may return."

I went to the seat of Shastri Swami upstairs. Swami was sitting. I did 'Dandvat Pranam' to him, hence in a slow voice he asked, 'Who are you?'

I gave my name. Shastri Swami immediately recognised me and asked me to come near him. I placed my head in the lap of Shastriji Maharaj. Swami gracefully placed his hand on my head and blessed me. I felt myself fulfilled.

I returned to Bapa and told him all these, hence Bapa said, "Very good, now where would you get his Darshan?" At that time, I could not understand the secret meaning of Bapa's words, but after one day only, I got the news that Shastriji Maharaj has left for 'Dham' at night. Then only I could understand the meaning of Bapa's talk. With great kindness towards me, Bapa sent me to have the Darshan of a great saint. Swami called me near and placed his hands on my head. The blessing of his last moments became invaluable memory of my entire life.

Nobody to Go to Ribda

Navinbhai Dave's Sahjanand Farm at Ribda is a unique place for celebration of festivals. This land is sanctified by Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. Jogi Swami has also visited this place many a times.

'May many saints, live at my home', as if this prayer has taken shape at this place.

Many 'Shakotsav' (festival of vegetable of Brinjal) similar to the 'Shakotsav' celebrated by Shree Hari in Loya village, have been celebrated here.

Small spiritual camps, just like a symbol of spiritual camps arranged on the bank of River Ganga at Rushikesh, are also arranged here often. The land of this farm is sanctified with the footprints of great saints and Haribhaktas.

Out of excessive service activities, whenever the saints want to rest, they would remember Navinbhai's farm at Ribda.

Once the saints had arranged a festival here in the same way. The grocery items for cooking were sent there. Some saints had reached there a day before, for preliminary arrangements.

On the day of festival, the saints in Rajkot, after performing their Pooja, got ready to go to Ribda farm. Jogi Swami was moving his Mala while performing his Pooja. The Haribhaktas were reading 'Vachanamrut' one by one. The saints came to take permission of Swami to go to Ribda. Swami saw turban on the head of the saints hence he asked, "Where are you going?"

The saints said, "Swami, a festival is arranged at Ribda hence we are to go there."

Swami said, "Who has arranged to go to Ribda?"

The saints said, "Dharmavallabh Swami. Swami said, "Call him."

When Dharmavallabh Swami came, Swami said, "Why do you arrange as you wish? Whether, anybody is there to ask you or not? Go and tell all the saints that nobody is to go to Ribda'.

As Jogi Swami ordered, the matter came to an end. The programme at Ribda was cancelled. Nobody could know why Swami said 'no'.

At that time, we were abroad. After concluding our foreign tour, we returned to Rajkot. The loving devotees and youths of Rajkot had arranged a welcome procession from Swaminarayan temple, Bhupendra Road to Gurukul.

After doing 'Darshan' in Bhupendra Road temple, we started our journey to Gurukul. In a decorated chariot, I was sitting beside Jogi Swami. On the way, Swami told me about a mysterious divine incident. "Shastri, all the saints were prepared to go to Ribda but I stopped them. Do you know, why?"

I said, 'No, how can I know that?'

Swami said, "Shastri, in the early morning I had the 'Darshan' of Maharaj. I could see Maharaj taking Mugat Swami to Akshardham. The body of Mugat Swami brought to Rajkot from Junagadh and placed on the ground of the school. I also went to the ground. To avoid ritual of 'Sutak', I paid homage with offering floral garland from far. I did not touch. That day I saw such scene; hence, I did not allow the saints to go to Ribda." And it happened as Swami had seen.

Mugat Swami was sick at Junagadh. He had severe attack of paralysis. Shree Hari had given him an indication of his death before a week. Mugat Swami had told this to the person (*Sevak*) who was in his service that, "Now, Maharaj would take me within a week".

Mugat Swami's health became more critical. The doctors opined to take him to Rajkot. Mugat swami was not willing. He said, 'Please don't. I do not want to go to Rajkot. This sickness has been sent by Maharaj to take me. However, the saints and devotees thought, 'It would be good if more treatment can be given'. Hence, they all placed Mugat Swami in a car and started to come to Rajkot but Maharaj took Mugat Swami to Akshardham while they were on the way to Rajkot.

The original name of Mugat Swami was Nirannmukktadasji but all called him Mugat Swami. He had served his entire life without any kind of desire.

‘He is the Mahant (chief of temple) who sweeps’ that maxim of Gunatitanand Swami was truly followed in his life by Mugat Swami.

Remaining under the command of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, he had taken over the responsibility of managing Junagadh Gurukul.

As Shree Hari has said in the Vachanamrut, he has addiction of service activity like Shree Uka Khachar.

As a result of his life-long service to the Satsang, Shree Hari took him to the Akshardham.

A day before, in the early morning, Shree Jogi Swami had the divine Darshan of Shreeji Maharaj taking with Him Mugat Swami.

As it was seen by Jogi Swami in the early morning, the body of Mugat Swami was placed on the ground of High School.

When Swami got this news, he took a floral garland and went there. He offered that garland to the body of Mugat Swami from far.

Now the saints could understand why Jogi Swami had not allowed them to go to Ribda in the morning.

Eva re malya re amane Jogiya, Jogi Jene Aagmna Endhan

Thai Thavani Jane Varta, Jene Harivar Pragat Praman

Meaning: We have got such a saint, who can foresee the future happenings, who knows the past and future and who bears in him, the God Himself.

The Land is Ready ..

Surat (Surat city) means an idol of gold. Bhagawan Swaminarayan has sanctified this city with inhabitation on the bank of river Tapti, with His footprints. Shree Hari had gladly awarded His turban to Ardesharji Kotwal, which is an important landmark of the history of Satsang.’

Shree Hari has gracefully given Narayan Munidev for devotion to the loving devotees of Surat, who is like a ‘Kalpa-Vriksha’ (wish fulfilling tree).

The mother like Saint of Gurukul, Shree Purani Premprakashdasji, had put his pious footprints on the land of this historical city, many years ago.

Wherever Purani Swami would go, the Satsang would bloom in its full.

The economic condition of the devotees of Surat was not as sound, as it is today. There were no facilities also available, as are available today. Amongst many discomforts, Purani Swami had nourished the garden of Satsang at this place.

Motibhai Sheth of Surat had much reverence for Purani Swami. Swami used to lodge in one side of his mill and call the people to Satsang.

The life of Purani Swami was clean and frank. Due to his talks full of total faith in Shree Hari, the Satsang bloomed in its full here.

Due to the faithful and enthusiastic devotees like Kher Saheb, a Satsang Mandal was established here. Slowly the people wished to have Gurukul there. During his days of sickness, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj had told to Dev Swami,

“You may establish Gurukul at Surat, if the saints are ready to take care of it.”

After the departure of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj for Akshardham, the search for land to establish Gurukul at Surat was started. Two years elapsed but no suitable land was found. One day Purani Dharmavallabhdasji came for the Darshan of Jogi Swami.

Jogi Swami asked him, “When are we going to Surat for laying foundation stone of Gurukul there?”

Dharmavallabhdasji said, “Swami, we are not getting suitable land”.

Jogi Swami said, “Our land is quite ready there”. Swami conveyed this to our past student Laljibhai Patel, Tulsibhai Goti and Kher Saheb etc. devotees as, ‘Go today only, the God is with you’. After that telephonic talk, Laljibhai etc. devotees came out in search of land. As they were passing by a field, two persons called them. Telling them about their search for the land, they said, “If your Swami is to come to live here and a temple and a school is to be created, then take our land.”

The work which could not be completed in the previous two years, completed in two hours only, with the blessings of Swami. Shree Laljibhai, Kantibhai and Premjibhai are past students of Gurukul. All the three are from village Ugamedi near Gadhapur. All the three thought that they are to give the land as a donation to their mother institution. At that time, they were not economically sound as they are today. Yet they dedicated with courage to donate the land to Gurukul.

On the pious day of ‘Akshay Trutiya’ of S.Y. 2046, dated 27-04-1990 Friday, the foundation stone of Surat Gurukul was laid at the auspicious hands of Pujya Jogi Swami. The

construction work started in 1991. The monetary support of Dhirajlal Kotadiya, a past student of Gurukul, proved good to this institution. And in May 1992, the inaugural ceremony of the school and hostel was celebrated.

With the blessings of Pujya Jogi Swami, various religious activities are being done there. The continuous chanting of Swaminarayan Mahamantra, continuous performance of Yagna, continuous writing of Swaminarayan Mahamantra etc. religious activities have been started there by Jogi Swami.

Our wish to have land, adjoining to the school was not being fulfilled. Despite our concerted efforts, we were unable to get that land. In the meanwhile, Jogi Swami arrived in Surat. Dharmavallabhdasji Swami and Vishwavihari Swami requested Jogi Swami to help in this matter. Jogi Swami went to that place and after stepping on the land he said, “Within one week, you will get this land”. Really, as Shree Jogi Swami had said, the land was received within a week.

Maharaj Will Help You

It was a day of 1990. It was afternoon. In front of Sadhu Ashram, there is a well. Near the well Jogi Swami was moving Mala. A youth namely Ramesh Ladhagai Sangani sat near Jogi Swami. He was from village ‘Varna’. The youth was much devout. He came daily to read Vachanamrut before Jogi Swami. If any devout seems to be heartily attached to Shreeji Maharaj, Jogi Swami would nourish his Satsang. There was negligible spread of Satsang in the village of Ramesh. However, when he came to study in Gurukul, the roots of Satsang became strong in his heart. His family was economically weaker. Due to the cheap rate of fees in the Gurukul, he could complete his study.

After completion of his study, Ramesh started working in the factory of Ghanshyambhai Khokhariya of Atkot. He worked in that factory for six years. There was a house of Girdharbapa near Gurukul. Ramesh lived there with some students. Girdharbapa did not take any rent from him but Ramesh helped him in his domestic works, hence Bapa took care of him. Under any circumstances, Ramesh invariably come to see Swami and read Vachanamrut.

One day Jogi Swami became much pleased with this devout youth. Swami said, "O boy, what is your occupation?"

Ramesh said, "Swami, I serve in a factory."

Swami said, "What can be done by serving? Start your own factory."

Ramesh said, "Swami, my economic condition is not good. How can I start a factory?"

Swami said, "Maharaj will help you, Start your own factory."

Ramesh also decided to start a factory on the words of Swami but he had no money. In the meanwhile, Vaishnav Dayabhai met him. Both knew each other very well. Dayabhai had some money and he was also willing to establish a factory, if a suitable partner were found to manage it.

Dayabhai told Ramesh, 'Ramesh let us start a factory in partnership.' Ramesh said, 'but I have no money to invest, what to do?' As if Shree Hari was speaking from his heart Dayabhai said, 'Ramesh, investment would be mine and labour will be yours.'

As if the words of Swami – 'Maharaj will help you' were taking real shape.

At last, they both started a factory in partnership. Required lathe machine was being manufactured in Ludhiana, hence they ordered for the machine but the situation in Punjab, at that time, was unsteady and tense due to the terrorism. The machine was entangled. It could not arrive until one year.

Swami, sometimes would ask Ramesh "O boy! When you are to start your factory?" One day Ramesh said, "I really want to start a factory but can't get machine. We have placed an order for a lathe machine with a firm in Ludhiana a year ago yet we have not received it. Due to the disturbances, the machine is entangled somewhere. If you permit, I will go to Punjab to get the machine."

Swami said, "In such a situation, you should not go to Punjab. Maharaj would bring your machine Tell me when the machine arrives. I will come to inaugurate your factory."

How much kindness of Swami was upon a small but deserving young Haribhakta! Many people would request Swami to come to their place but if Swami would wish, he would go, otherwise would deny. But for Ramesh, he said, 'I will come to inaugurate your factory.'

With the grace of Shree Hari, the machine arrived exactly ten days after the saint spoke of it. Everyone was surprised. The machine, which was entangled for one year, arrived in ten days only. It was unbelievable for the people.

Ramesh gladly informed Swami, "Swami! With your grace machine has arrived". Swami said, "It is due to the grace of Maharaj, not of me. It is good. Let us go to inaugurate it."

Swami arrived at the workshop of Ramesh. He placed the Murti of Maharaj on the Machine, did *Chandla* and adorned it with flowers, rice, etc. Thus, the workshop of Ramesh was

inaugurated. With the blessings of Swami, the business increased day by day. Today the workshop has twelve lathes and the business is in full bloom.

In Varna, the village of Ramesh, the Satsang was negligible. Ramesh organised a Katha in Varna. Swami also came to Varna. With the preaching of the saints, the Satsang spread in that village. On the words of Swami, a beautiful temple has been built under the supervision of Shreehari Swami.

Before some years, there had been a dangerous cyclone in coastal areas of Saurashtra. On that occasion, as a part of relief work, a beautiful school building was constructed under the supervision of Gurukul with the co-operation of Saurashtra-Janmabhumi Trust and Phulchab Parivar.

Swami has not only strengthened the 'Satsang' in the life of Ramesh, but with his grace, the satang has spread in the entire village.

The Permit Ended

Shree Navinbhai Dave is a trustee of Gurukul. His father Chandubhai was a very good devotee. He had come in the contact of big saints. He had also come in the contacts of a great devotee and a *Mukhtaraj* Abjibapa. Due to his sickness, he was admitted into a hospital at Mumbai.

At that time, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj was in London. He stayed at the residence of Ravjibhai of Bharasar, who was a past student of Gurukul.

Here in Mumbai, the doctors advised Navinbhai, "Your father would not live for more than two hours. You may take him home and arrange for the last rituals."

Navinbhai said, "Let it be as Maharaj wish" and he got ready to take his father home.

The Doctor said, "Navinbhai, the condition of your father is extremely serious. Perhaps he will not reach home alive."

The doctor gave a death certificate of Chandubhai to Navinbhai before his death with a view to save Navinbhai from inconvenience of coming back in a heavy traffic of Mumbai.

Navinbhai brought his father home with that death certificate and he talked to Swami on telephone. Swami was just coming from *Padharamni* and the phone rang. Swami took the receiver. I was standing near him. Swami had held my wrist. With the other hand, he held the receiver. Navinbhai requested to Swami to pray for his father. Swami said, "Don't worry. We are requesting Maharaj. He would not take Chandubhai to Akshardham. We have decided to celebrate a festival in Rajkot, and Maharaj would not take Chandubapa until the celebration is over. Then let it be as Maharaj wish! We are writing a letter to you." He concluded with these words.

He wrote a letter as he had said. With the request of great saints, Maharaj lengthened the life of Chandubapa. Chandubapa was cured.

A grand religious festival was celebrated in presence of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. Shree Navinbhai Dave was chief host of the celebration.

Swami had created 'Shreedhar Kund', very first time in Gujarat and successfully arranged Mahavishnuyag. For Yagna purpose 'Shreedhar Kund' is the best form of Kund. It is Lotus shaped Kund. In the big petals, many kunds are created. Central one is in shape of lotus. Near that, there is a place for God and other deities are situated around. The 'Mahavishnuyag' celebration was grand and divine.

After the grand celebration, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj departed for Akshardham. Eight years elapsed. Chandubhai fell ill again. Gurudev was not there. Navinbhai requested Jogi Swami, 'Swami, pray to Maharaj to prolong my father's life for further two years'.

Jogi Swami said, "Ok! Maharaj would let live your father for two years more." That two years' term was about to end. Chandubhai had come to Rajkot. He was quite well. There were no symptoms of any illness in his body.

There is a temple on Bhupendra Road, Rajkot, which is known as 'Bordivalu Mandir'. Jogi Swami visited that temple daily in the evening for the Darshan of 'Aarti'. While returning to the Gurukul, Swami thought 'Chandubhai has come from Mumbai. Let us go to see him.'

Swami came to 'Sahjanand Bhavan', residence of Navinbhai. Chandubhai became extremely glad to see Jogi Swami and met him with great love and affection. He said with a smile, 'Swami, now you may please send me to Akshardham.'

Swami said, "Vihari, sing a Kirtan."

Vishvavihari sang Kirtan 'Sahjanand Sukhakari re Saluni Chhabi.'

On hearing the Kirtan, Chandubhai said, "How the Kirtans full of affection towards Maharaj have been written by Nand saints."

It was night. The twinkling stars were anxious to witness a wonderful incident! Swami was in a hilarious mood. He asked Chandubapa, "Do you really want to go to Akshardham? Or you are lightly talking about it?"

Chandubapa said, "Yes Swami, now I really want to go to Akshardham."

Swami said, "Have you any desire in your heart? If it is, you will have to stay midway."

Chandubapa said, "No Swami, really there is no desire but Navin does not permit".

Swami said, "Navin would come from Mumbai within two days. If you really want to go, then get his permission and be ready." Saying this much, Swami returned to Gurukul.

Shreehari Swami and other accompanying saints were wonderstruck to hear this dialogue.

Navinbhai's love and affection towards his father was great.

He took much care of him. He wanted to serve his father for some more years.

After coming from Mumbai, Navinbhai came to Gurukul to have the Darshan of Jogi Swami. He said to Jogi Swami, "Swami, please pray to Maharaj to further lengthen the life of my father."

Swami said to Navinbhai, "No, we shall not pray now. Now the period of permit has already elapsed. Maharaj had permitted two years only. It has ended. Now permit your father for his departure for Akshardham."

Navinbhai was surprised to hear Swami's clear-cut talk. He could not speak. Chandubapa was quite well. Nobody could imagine that in such a way anybody could go to Akshardham.

Next day in the morning, Chandubapa went to crematory. He did the Darshan of Ramnath Mahadev and said, "Now I am to come here."

Incidentally, Chandubapa's second son Dhirubhai was also present. Navinbhai was to go to Mumbai in a flight scheduled

for departure at 15-00 hours. However, the wish of Shree Hari was different. Navinbhai went to the Airport but the flight was cancelled. He returned home. On 21st December 1992 at 17-00 hours in the evening, Shreeji Maharaj gave His 'Darshan' to Bapa and in presence of all the family members, Shreeji Maharaj took him to the Akshardham.

Heart Disease Cured

Navinbhai Dave of Mumbai is a leader of Gurukul family and a faithful disciple of Jogi Swami. His health was not good. He had cardiac problem as well as thyroid problem. He had gone to America twice or thrice for diagnosis. Once he had suffered a heart attack also but with the blessings of Jogi Swami, Shree Hari had saved him and he had got new life.

As some arteries of his heart were blocked, the doctors had advised him for the operation in the renowned hospital of Huston in America. With the consent of Navinbhai, all his medical reports were sent to Huston. The doctor's appointment was also taken for performing operation.

Before leaving for the USA, Navinbhai came to Rajkot for the blessings of Jogi Swami. Swami was seated on a slab near Sadhu Ashram and was moving Mala. After doing Darshan, Navinbhai sat near Swami. Swami gave him 'Prasadi' of Sugar crystals with love.

The saints of Gurukul reported to Jogi Swami, "Swami, Navinbhai has heart related problem. He is required to go to America for the operation."

Hearing this, Swami, continued to move Mala for some time and then said, "Navinbhai, Maharaj is pleased with you. You will require no operation. Maharaj will cure your disease."

After receiving the blessings of Jogi Swami, Navinbhai came to America. At the same time, a blessed disciple of Abajibapa, Naranmama was present in America.

Before going to Huston, Navinbhai apprised him on telephone that I have such difficulty, I am going to the Hospital for operation.

Naranmama also said, "No need to worry. Operation would not be required. Shree Hari would protect you".

Incidentally, we were also in America at that time in our endeavour to nourish and to spread Satsang. Navinbhai told us about the situation of his health and the blessings of both the great saintly personalities.

With the blessings of both the saints, suddenly a divine thing happened in the life of Navinbhai. Navinbhai got himself admitted into the Hospital. Before operation, all the medical tests were carried out again. On seeing the new test reports, the doctors became wonderstruck, because the arteries, which appeared to be blocked in the old reports, were now appearing opened up in the new reports. There was a slight problem in one artery.

The doctors were amazed. They said, "We can't understand how this has happened. Certainly, you are bestowed upon by the grace of the God or the blessings of a great saint. Otherwise, this can not happen. Now you don't require any operation."

Thus, a great danger was averted in the life of Navinbhai with the grace of great divine personalities Jogi Swami and Naranmama.

Shree Hari awarded new life to Navinbhai to serve the Satsang and the institution (Gurukul).

Eva Jo Malya re Amne Jogiya
Hare Jo ne Bhavo Bhav na Rog
Gutika Gajab Hari Namni
Nakhshikh kare re Nirog.

Meaning: We have got such a saint Who can remove the disease of several births. Who, with a capsule of God's name completely cures a person!

Changed the Destiny

Vallabhbbhai Popatbbhai Radadiya was a former student of Gurukul. His niece, Diwaliben was married to Raghavbbhai Hirpara of village Targhadiya in 1978.

Diwaliben conceived after a year, but unluckily she suffered uterus disorder. She gave birth to a child but the child died immediately after birth.

The couple's hope for a son failed. Doctors were of the opinion that Diwaliben would never become a mother.

Fifteen years rolled by. The couple accepted the fact of the destiny that they would not become parents. They kept their residence in Rajkot and engrossed their mind in devotion and 'Satsang'.

As Raghavbbhai resided near Gurukul, he came frequently to Gurukul for the Darshan. As he was not a follower of Swaminarayan Sampraday, he did not know anybody in the Gurukul. As he got peace of mind in Gurukul, he came to sit in the Gurukul sometimes for one or two hours.

As Raghavbbhai frequently visited Gurukul, he came into contact of Jogi Swami. Raghavbbhai was thinking to tell the

matter of his sorrow to Jogi Swami but he was experiencing confusion whether to tell such a thing to such a great saint!

One day he gathered courage and prayed to Jogi Swami, "Swami, I have no child. If you are kind to me, I can have a child."

Jogi Swami said, "Come tomorrow."

Next day Raghavbbhai came to Swami. Swami prayed to Maharaj and gave him the water offered to Maharaj. Swami initiated him into the Swaminarayan Sampraday and gave him the vow of 'Seva-Pooja'.

Raghavbbhai started to follow the vows of the Sampraday with due faith. Diwaliben too followed her husband in religious practices.

With the grace and blessings of the great saint Jogi Swami, Diwaliben conceived.

On the seventh month of pregnancy Diwaliben's health deteriorated. She was admitted to the hospital. The Doctors conducted required tests and said that the child would not live.

Raghavbbhai rushed to Jogi Swami and reported the situation.

Swami said, "Don't worry. There would be no harm to the child. Remember Shreeji Maharaj."

In the eighth month, Diwaliben gave birth to a healthy baby boy in the hospital of Dr. Siddharth Patel.

After a month and a quarter, the child was taken for the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami. Swami gave him the name 'Baldev'. Thereafter, five-month-old 'Baldev' was initiated into the Sampraday by Jogi Swami.

The grace of a great saint can make a soul fulfilled. A saint can alter the course of fortune. An able Guru's will can change the destiny of a soul.

Eva Jo Malya re Amne Jogiya

Karamni Rekh par Mare Mekh

Vidhina Lakhya re Keme Nav tale

Tale Koi Male Mota Bhekh

Meaning :

We have got such a saint

Who can change the destiny (of a soul)

The destiny which can't be changed

Can be changed by a great saint.

The Birth of 'Harikrishna'

Village 'Ambada' is situated near Una. Most of its inhabitants are masons and potters. None has any affiliation with Swaminarayan Sampraday in this village. As this village is situated in coastal area, the people indulged in meat and wine.

Purani Swami Premprakashdasji came to this village. The seeds of 'Satsang' blossomed in this land. The people gave up meat & wine and became followers of Swaminarayan Sampraday.

Many students of this village came to study in Gurukul and as the lotus sprouts from the mud, they started living virtuous life.

One of them is Chhaganbhai Kidecha. He came to the Gurukul in his younger age and after completion of his study in

the Gurukul, became the principal of a primary school. Chhaganbhai became thirty eight years old. In his eleven years of married life, he had got two daughters but he had no son.

The 'Maya' of the God is quite strong. The house-holders can't give up the desire of having a son. They can't be content with having daughters. This matter is interwoven with the feelings of the heart that, despite several clarifications, the mind of most of the householder can't be convinced. Not only the men, women also prefer male child. Now the time has come, when the house-holders shall come out of this old concept and would consider the son and daughter at par.

Shree Chhaganbhai being a man of understanding did not feel any remorse. He was of the belief that what has been given by Shree Hari is good, yet he had a hope for a male child in his heart.

Once Purani Swami Gnanswarupdasji asked, "Chhagan, how many sons, you have?"

Chhaganbhai said Swami, "I have two daughters, no son".

Gnan Swami kindly said, "Let us go to Jogi Swami. Swami would give you blessings and you would have a son".

It was eleventh day of first half of Vaishakh month of S.Y. 1992. On the days of full moon-day, Ekadashi and Hari Jayanti, Swami used to perform 'Pooja' for the whole day. Gnanswami, alongwith Chhaganbhai came to Swami and requested him "Swami, bless Chhaganbhai so Maharaj may give him a son".

Jogi Swami looked at the Murti of Maharaj and said, "Chhagan, Maharaj is pleased with you, he would give you a son. You and your wife should observe the vow (Vrat) of Hari

Jayanti and tell your wife to move Mala 50 times daily. When Maharaj fulfills your desire and male child is born, take him to Junagadh for the Darshan of the Deities."

After the blessings of Jogi Swami, the wife of Chhaganbhai conceived. In the fifth month of her pregnancy, the lady doctor asked Chhaganbhai whether he wanted to have a check up of the sex of embryo as he already had two daughters.

The science is for the benevolence of the humankind but the people have misused it. The cruelty done to the female embryo, through sonography, is heartbreaking.

Many decades ago, cruel custom was prevalent in the Darbar community. The newly born baby girl was drowned in a pot of milk. Today a disliked child could be killed in the womb of its mother. Is there any difference between these two acts?

The nature of Chhaganbhai was religious. Hence, he could never indulge himself in such an irreligious and cruel acts. Yet he had anxiety to know the sex of the embryo. Chhaganbhai thought, 'I have been blessed by Jogi Swami, therefore I shall proceed as advised by Swami in the matter. He told the lady doctor that he would answer her next day.

Chhaganbhai consulted Gnan Swami. Gnan Swami advised him to ask Jogi Swami and to do as per his advice.

Chhaganbhai told Jogi Swami. Jogi Swami gazed at Chhaganbhai for a while and then said, "Don't you have trust? Maharaj would certainly give you a baby boy. Do not check the gender."

On the words of Swami, Chhaganbhai gave up the idea of gender test. On 22-03-1993 a baby boy was born. When the boy became a month and a quarter old, Chhaganbhai took him to Jogi Swami for the initiation. Jogi Swami initiated the boy

into the Sampraday and blessed him by putting his hand on the head of the boy.

Chhaganbhai said, "Swami, this child is to be named. He is born in Aquarius. He will be named as you suggest."

Swami did not speak. He went to the Murti of the God. He then returned and said, "Chhagan, leave zodiac aside. This son is given by Harikrishna Maharaj. Give him the name of 'Hari Krishna'. Now don't think otherwise."

On the advice of Jogi Swami, Chhaganbhai gave the name Hari Krishna to that boy. At present, this Harikrishna is studying in the school of Gurukul.

The grace and compassion of great saints can change the destiny.

Mostly in the world, the blessings have become a matter of business but the style of true great saints would be different. His heart would be full of compassion. He would have no selfish motive.

Once Chhaganbhai had a paralytic stroke, hence he thought to consult Dr. Jagani. Before going to Dr. Jagani, he came to Gurukul for the Darshan.

It was five O'clock in the evening. Swami was moving Mala in Sadhu Ashram.

As Chhaganbhai came for the Darshan, Swami asked, "Why have you come this time?"

Chhaganbhai said, "Swami, I had effect of paralysis on my mouth, hence I am going to the hospital."

Swami said, "Come here, let me see where the effect of Paralysis is." Saying this Swami gave a touch of his Mala, where there was an effect of Paralysis and said, "Run away" and effect of Paralysis gone.

Then Chhaganbhai went to Dr. Jagani for checking.

After check-up the doctor said, "Nothing is there. Everything is OK."

'Eva Jo Malya re amane Jogiya

Karuna Sagar Sant saday

Motida Bharya re Ena Udare

Moti Amulakh Kaheway'

Means: We have got such a great saint whose heart is full of compassion. He is like an ocean of kindness.

Can 'Yam' Harass a Saint ?

After retiring from the service of the garden, Jogi Swami, mostly, did *Bhajan-Smaran* sitting under the almond tree behind Sadhu-Ashram.

A jute bag would have been spread on the sand. Swami would sit on the same. Before him, the Murti of Maharaj would be sat. The saints and devotees would read scriptures one by one.

For all the branches and sub-branches of Gurukul, over 150 saints and thousands of Haribhaktas, for all of them Jogi Swami can be considered a shelter and a source of inspiration as well. However, Maharaj lives, in his every pore, yet no false show, no publicity at all. The style of this word-accomplished saint is quite straightforward without any pomp or glory.

Pomp and glory of a head of even a small monastery or a temple would be much. The householder would be intoxicated with power and wealth. The saint would be intoxicated when the people would worship him. However, the style and nature

of Jogi Swami is unique and divine. Thousands of people would flock with folded hands for service, yet Swami would have no impact on him. He is always one with Maharaj. He has no relation with the worldly things.

The elderly saint of such a big institution, having many branches, sits on a Jute-bag spread on the ground under an almond tree while he worships the God. This scene itself is surprising. That divine scene has stuck in my heart.

Once In 1995, at noon, Swami was sitting under that almond tree. Some Darbar Haribhaktas had come for the Darshan. Vihari Swami was reading the biography of Raghavanand Swami. An incident narrated in the biography came in which four brothers namely Bhim, Vashram, Raghav and Rano compelled the Yama (or Jama) (representative of God of death) to run away.

With a little smile Swami asked, "Vihari, have you seen Yama?"

Vihari said, "No Swami, I haven't."

Swami said, "I have seen him."

Vishvavihari asked, "Swami, where did you see Yama?"

Swami said, "Years ago, I was in Junagadh temple. One Brahmachari (a celibate) was sick. I went to see his health at night. The Brahmachari was sleeping and one or two persons sat near him."

After seeing the health of the Brahmachari, I sat to move Mala in assembly hall, which was constructed by Gunatitanand Swami. In the meanwhile, I could see Gunatitanand Swami and Gopalanand Swami in the assembly hall. Their bodies were radiant and both were walking from one end of the hall to the

other end of it with Mala in hand. I felt great joy in my heart with their 'Darshan'.

After some time I could see two black coloured 'Yama' coming down from the sky. They went to the bed of that sick Brahmachari. As both the 'Yamas' tried to take away the life of the Brahmachari, Gunatitanand Swami raised his hand and threatened them. "Don't touch that soul. That is ours, not yours".

With the threatening of Gunatitanand Swami, both the 'Yamas' trembled and went away. After some time again both the 'Yamas' came and tried to take away the 'Jiva' of that Brahmachari. Then Gopalanand Swami threatened them, "Go back, otherwise you will be punished." At last, both the 'Yamas' fled away and both the saints smiled at me and disappeared.

Vishwavihari asked, "Why 'Yamas' came to take life of that Brahmachari? Why Maharaj did not come and why did Maharaj send great saints?"

Swami said, "There would be some imperfection in observing the *Vartaman* (the five vows of Satsang) by Brahmachari. He might have harassed some poor Haribhaktas. Therefore, Maharaj did not come. Instead 'Yamas' came. However, the Brahmachari had great faith and devotion for Gunatitanand Swami and Gopalanand Swami. So they relieved him from the snare of 'Jamas' and took him with them."

Vishvavihari Swami again asked, "Swami, where would Gunatitanand Swami take him? To Akshardham or elsewhere?"

Swami said, "Such soul can't be brought to Akshardham. But relieving him from hell, he would be sent to Badrikashram to do penance to get rid of his sins."

Again, Vishwavihari Swami asked, "Can you see all such incredible visions?"

Swami replied, "With the grace of Maharaj, I could see such things since my childhood."

Many times Swami remembers this occasion. Once remembering the incident, when I was sitting with Swami, he asked, "Shastri, can 'Jama' come to take the life of a Sadhu?" I replied, when 'Jama' can't come to take a life of a 'Satsangi' how can they come to take a life of a Sadhu?"

With a laugh Swami said, "If a Sadhu does not observe the rules of the Sampraday, Jama may come to take him."

Saying this Swami narrated the above incident in detail.

Shreeji Maharaj has promised His followers to take them to the Akshardham but if there is any imperfection in observing the rules of Satsang fellowship, Maharaj would not take that soul to Akshardham. But he would be put into other place to become perfect, to get rid of sinful stains and then only he would be taken to Akshardham. Therefore, the saints and Haribhaktas shall remain alert in observing the rules of Satsang fellowship perfectly.

Maharaj Has not Forgotten Me

Village Dholara is situated near Rajkot. Its population is 3000 but very few families were the followers of Swaminarayan Sampraday. Yet, however, Jogi Swami had great compassion for the devotees of Dholara. Swami used to come here to organize Dhoon and Bhajan.

The village had an old temple facing south. The front portion of the temple was narrow. Swami thought that the temple has been dilapidated, the front is narrow and it is possible to get the land adjoining behind the temple. If a North-facing

temple is created, it would be bigger one, the front portion would also be spacious and ample space would be there to create rooms for saints to stay. With such volition of Jogi Swami, a new big temple is built within a short period.

Jogi Swami stayed at Dholara while the construction work was on. Once it was afternoon. Swami was moving the Mala while sitting on the slab.

Jogi Swami had a thought: There is acute shortage of water in the temple; hence, a bore-well should be drilled.

Swami stood up, he moved in the compound of the temple and set a stone at one place, with decision to drill a bore-well there.

Thereafter, again Swami sat on that slab, started moving Mala. After some time Shree Hari appeared in His divine form before Jogi Swami. With the Darshan of Maharaj Jogi Swami became overwhelmed.

With a smile, Maharaj asked, 'Swami, do you want to create a bore-well?'

With folded hands Swami said, 'Yes, Maharaj'.

Maharaj said, 'There is no ground water where you have placed the stone. I would send a man tomorrow. Drill the bore-well where he suggests and there would be much water'. Saying this Shree Hari disappeared.

There was a gentleman in Dholara. His name was Kanabhai and he was middle aged. Earlier he was not a follower of Swaminarayan Sampraday. Thereafter, he came into contact of Jogi Swami and became a good Satsangi and started to come to the temple. He also offered his services to the temple. Whenever Jogi Swami would come to Dholara, Kanabhai used to offer grocery items for the meal of the saints.

When Swami arrived in Dholara, Kanabhai came to the temple. He did the Darshan of the God, bowed down to Jogi Swami and said, 'Jay Swaminarayan'. Swami also responded, 'Jay Swaminarayan'.

Kanabhai said, "Swami, last night I had your Darshan in the dream."

Swami said, "It is good to have the Darshan of a saint in lieu of other things."

Jogi Swami felt that this person must have been sent by Maharaj, hence he asked, "Kanabhai, would there be water in this land? We want to get a bore-well drilled."

Kanabhai said, "Yes, there is a mark at the place where the old throne was there."

Swami said, "Let us go to see."

Both went to that place. Kanabhai pointed and showed the line marked there.

Jogi Swami realised that this is not Kanabhai speaking but Maharaj Himself speaks through Kanabhai. Thereafter, Swami got prepared a bore-well there and much water was available.

Thereafter Murti Pratishtha ceremony was celebrated with great fervour. 'Katha Parayan' of Shreemad Bhagawat was also arranged. Many devout of the village had joined the Holy Order of 'Swaminarayan Sampraday'.

There were some headstrong people in the village. Their tyranny was much. With the contact of Jogi Swami, they also surrendered to the God and became 'Satsangi'. They gave up their addictions and their strength was diverted in the right direction.

Remembering this incident frequently, Swami used to say “No matter whether good water could be available or not, no matter whether a temple could be constructed or not, it is a matter of joy for me that Maharaj has not forgotten me.”

‘Ava re malya re Amne Jogiya

Haiye Jene Sahaj Ajapa Jap

Harivar Sambhare Jene Het-thi

Jogi Tara Map re Amap

Meaning: We have got such a saint (Jogi Swami), who always does the Jap of Shree Hari, whom Shree Hari remembers with joy, O Jogi Swami, your devotion is rare and incomparable, immeasurable.

Go to Badrikashram

Jogi Swami had much compassion for the Vimal Parivar of Ahmedabad. Jadavjibhai, Lalu Bhagat, Dayalbhai etc. brothers had great respect for Jogi Swami. There was some disturbance due to affliction of ancestors in this family.

A ghost used to possess the body of Jadavjibhai. Whenever the ghost came in the body, the body became red and Jadavji cried. Once Jogi Swami was in Ahmedabad. Jadavjibhai came for the Darshan of Jogi Swami. At that time, that ghost possessed the body of Jadavjibhai. Many saints were present there. Swami sent them outside except Vishvavihari.

Swami asked the ghost, “Who are you? Why are you harassing this devotee?”

The ghost was crying much, but it was not able to speak. Much time passed.

Swami said, “Whoever you are, tell and stop harassing this devotee.”

Then that ghost said, “We are ancestors of this man. We are degenerated souls. If good work would be done by our family, it would release us from such a state of existence.”

Jogi Swami said, “Go away. They will arrange the reading of Bhagawat Katha. Now leave the body.”

The souls said, “Please allow us to stay in his body to hear the proposed ‘Katha’ till it is over, then we will leave.”

The saint agreed. Thereafter that family very nicely arranged a ‘Bhagawat Katha’ at Ahmedabad. Gnan Swami and I were the orators.

Jogi Swami visited the residence of that family. Vishvavihari Swami and Gnan Swami were with Swami at that time. There was a recess in the wall there, in which many ‘Falas’ were there. ‘Fala’ is an upward triangle made of a piece of wood. It is believed that the manes are used to live in the ‘Fala’. Occasionally these ‘Falas’ are worshipped, food is offered as sacrament. The people believe that their ancestors will be pleased by such worship and oblations.

Jogi Swami sprinkled holy water on ‘Falas’ and said, “Go to Badrikashram” Then Swami asked Vihari Swami, “Vihari, take all these ‘Falas’ and place them all in the river.”

Vishvavihari took all those Falas and throw them in the water of River Sabarmati.

Thus, the ancestors of Vimal family left the body of Jadavjibhai and peace and happiness prevailed in the Vimal family.

Dig the Bore Here

Ishwarbhai Patel, Jayantibhai Kacha and Jagdishbhai Makwana and 20 to 25 other youths and a group of masons could be considered the hands and feet of Gurukul. Be it a construction work of temples in the villages or creating a check-dam anywhere, on the words of Shreehari Swami, all these people would render their services without any expectation.

Jogi Swami had great kindness for all these devotees. With the grace of Jogi Swami, all these devotees have become prosperous and happy. One of them, Shree Jagdishbhai Makwana has sent us his own experience in writing. It is as under:

Jagdishbhai Makwana wanted to construct a building of a workshop. However, there was a shortage of water. He thought that if Jogi Swami bestowed upon him his grace, water could be available in the bore-well at the place of workshop and then the task of constructing a workshop would be easy.

With this volition, Jagdishbhai came to Swami. It was afternoon. Swami was moving the Mala, sitting in front of the Thakoraji in the Sadhu Ashram. Jagdishbhai did the Darshan of Maharaj and Jogi Swami.

Swami asked him the purpose of his visit.

Jagdishbhai said, "Swami, I want to start construction work of a workshop but there is no water. Therefore, I want to have a bore-well. You may please come to that place and wherever you would suggest, I would drill a bore well there."

Swami said, "Today I am very tired, hence can not come to your workshop. However, in your workshop, there is a road

in the north and a 'Vonklo' (rivulet) in the south. Between these two, there is a small hill. Bore there and Maharaj will give you water."

Jagdishbhai got drilled a bore-well there. In one kilometer area around Jagdishbhai's workshop, the people had drilled several bore wells but no water was available up to the depth of 400 to 500 feet. However, Jagdishbhai got sufficient water at the depth of ninety feet only. The construction work was done swiftly and it was over in time. When the construction work was over, the water in the bore-well was also over. As if, Maharaj had sent water for a devotee only.

This Jagdishbhai wanted to construct a house in a plot of land purchased by him. Therefore, on the pious day of 'Vasant Panchami', a ceremony of laying down the foundation stone at the auspicious hands of Jogi Swami was arranged. Jogi Swami had great love for all these youth working day and night for Gurukul without any expectation. Therefore, Swami gladly came to perform the ritual of laying down the foundation stone.

The festival of 'Vasant Panchami' is always celebrated in the Gurukul on a large scale with fervour in the morning. Before its starting, this ritual was to be completed. I, Shreehari Swami and some other saints with Jogi Swami, went to Jagdishbhai's house.

That land is fortunate where Jogi Swami lays the foundation stone. The owner of the house would be more fortunate for having the foundation stone laid by Jogi Swami. As the ritual of lying of foundation stone was done by Jogi Swami, the entire family of Jagdishbhai was very happy.

Jagdishbhai wanted to drill in the compound of the house for permanent source of water but in the overwhelming joy, he forgot to request Jogi Swami to mark the place for Bore well.

After performing the ritual of laying foundation stone, Jogi Swami sat in the car and it began to move. However, suddenly as if Shree Hari has inspired Jogi Swami to fulfill the volition of his devotee, Jogi Swami asked, "Oh you wanted to mark the place to bore thereat."

Jagdishbhai said, "In my overwhelming joy, I forgot to ask you about it."

Swami came out of the car and touched his stick at one place on the land and said, "Dig bore-well here, you will get water."

Shreehari Swami said, "Jagdishbhai, you mark that place so that the place cannot be forgotten."

Jagdishbhai immediately got started the work of bore. The Bore reached up to 210 feet deep but except powder of black rock, nothing came out. There was no sign of availability of water there.

Jagdishbhai got a little worried. The bore-well was going deeper and deeper but there was no sign of water. As his patience dwindled, he hurriedly came to Gurukul and told to Swami, "Swami I am worried. The powder of black rock is coming out of the bore but no sign of water."

Swami asked, "Oh, did you change the mark?"

Jagdishbhai said, "No Swami, Bore-well is being drilled on the exact place you had marked."

Swami remembered Maharaj for some time and then said, "Go home, let the Bore well be deeper. Do not worry. Maharaj would give water and inform me immediately when water is struck."

Jagdishbhai then returned home. He saw that water was gushing in of the well. On the words of Swami, Maharaj created

the fountains of water in the dry land. Jagdishbhai again rushed to Gurukul and appraised Jogi Swami.

Swami said, "Oh, you don't have patience. See, Maharaj has given water. Now telephone home and ask to stop boring. Not to bore deeper." Swami determined the limit of Bore-well.

On the same day, the Murti Pratishtha ceremony was to be celebrated in the village Jivapar near Tankara; hence, Shreehari Swami along with some saints had gone there. I was also to go there.

The Satsang of village Jivapar was quite new. There was no 'Satsangis' in Jivapar before. The students of the village came to study in the Gurukul. The saints from Gurukul visited Jivapar frequently for the spread of Satsang. As a result, the Satsang spread in the village. With the inspiration of Jogi Swami, a temple was built there under the supervision of Shreehari Swami. Jayantibhai, Jagdishbhai etc. masons contributed to a great extent in the form of labour work, in construction of the temple.

Now the mind of Jagdishbhai flew to Jivapar. He telephoned home and said to his wife, 'Now stop boring work. I am going to Jivapar with the saints'.

Next day in the morning, Jagdishbhai came to Gurukul for the Darshan of Swami. Swami said, "Oh, why did you run away to Jivapar? Should you go to Jivapar leaving the bore-well unprotected? What would be, if someone puts stones in it? Maharaj is taking care of you."

Really, Jagdishbhai, keeping aside everything, went to Jivapar for the work of God. Here at home of Jagdishbhai the God protected the bore-well. As mother takes care of a child, Swami takes care of the dedicated devotees.

The scriptures have called Shree Hari as affectionate and loving towards the devotees and due to the devotion of Shree Hari, His true saints are also affectionate and loving towards the devotees of Shree Hari. The only condition is the devotee should be really a true and loving one.

When this incident happened, as it was 'Vasant Panchami,' I was also there in Rajkot and I am an eyewitness of the incident.

Maharaj Would Take You After Two Days

Shanti Bapa of Rajkot was originally from village Mota Ankadiya near Amreli. As he was the owner of K.S. Diesel Co., he was known as K.S. Dieselwala.

The life of Shanti bapa, well known as 'Shanti Maharaj' was quite virtuous. He was constantly vigilant in observing even the smaller commands of Shree Hari. Even in his sickness, he never compromised in observance of rules of diet and conduct. He became old and his body became weak. Many people advised him that after the age of 80, the rules of conduct do not apply, yet he never accepted it for himself. He used to say, 'Till the body works normally and its awareness remains, the commands of Shree Hari must be observed'. Thus, he observed virtuous religious duties throughout his life.

He had rendered his services to the Jetpur temple to a large extent. When Sadguru Shastriji Maharaj departed for Akshardham, on that night Shree Hari had given him His Darshan and had said, 'We are taking our 'Mukta' to Akshardham'.

Shanti bapa had great affection for Jogi Swami. He came daily for Darshan of Swami till he was physically able to come.

He used to take Jogi Swami to Vadtal, Gadhapur in his car frequently. On the Pratishtha anniversary day, he would invariably take Jogi Swami to Gadhapur, Vadtal etc.

Due to very old age, Shanti bapa became very weak. When Jogi Swami got this news, he decided to see Shanti bapa. In those days, Swami's health was good. Swami were daily going to Bhupendra Road Swaminarayan temple in the evening for the Darshan of 'Aarti'. This was the daily routine of Jogi Swami for many years.

One day, as per the daily routine, Swami prepared to go to Bhupendra Road temple. Hansrajbhai Dhama had sent his car to take Swami. Shree Hari Swami and other saints were accompanying Swami. Before sitting in the car, Swami advised the accompanying saints, "Today, after doing the Darshan, we will go to see Shanti bapa, hence take with you two garlands." The saints were surprised. If we are to go to see Shanti bapa, only one garland would be required, then why Swami told us to take two garlands. However, when Jogi Swami ordered, none was to doubt. The saints took two garlands with them as advised by Jogi Swami.

After doing Darshan in the Bhupendra Road temple, Swami arrived at the residence of Shantibapa. Shantibapa, after taking bath, was preparing for Aarti. As Jogi Swami arrived at his house, Shantibapa became extremely glad. Jogi Swami and Shanti bapa did Aarti of Maharaj jointly. Shanti Bapa worshipped Swami with sandalwood. Jogi Swami garlanded him with the garland of Prasadi. Thereafter Shanti bapa sat on a coat and Jogi Swami sat before him in a chair.

Vihari Swami Sang the Kirtan

'Tamari Murti Vina Mara Nath re Biju Mane Aapsho Ma'

Means: Oh my God, do not give me anything other than your Murti.

On hearing this Kirtan, Shanti bapa became much pleased and said, "How wonderful Kirtans the Nand Saints have created! Thereafter he remembered Sadguru Balmukund Swami, Narayandasji Swami etc. great saints. After some time Jogi Swami asked to sing one more Kirtan, hence Vihari Swami sang the Kirtan,

'Murti Mare Manmani Re Mohan Tari Murti Manmani.'

Meaning: Oh God, I like your Murti very much.

Swami asked, Shantibapa, "Remember the events when we were going to Gadhada, Vadtal together for the Darshan?"

Shantibapa said, "Swami, I do the same. While sleeping in the bed, I do 'Bhajan' and remember the great saints like you and Maharaj also. I do not remember any worldly thing. I am waiting for Maharaj to take me to Akshardham along with him."

Swami said, "Continue to do Bhajan in this way. Maharaj will come to take you within a short period." After saying this, Jogi Swami put a sugar crystal of Prasadi in his mouth.

Navinbhai, the son of Shantibapa, was standing beside him. Swami said to him, "Navin, you have served your father well. Continue to serve him for two days. After that Maharaj will take your father to Akshardham."

Thereafter, Jogi Swami, looking at the saints said, "Give me the second garland." Saints gave that second garland. Then Swami said, "Navin, this garland is for going to Akshardham. Preserve it and garland your father when he departs for Akshardham." Saying this, Swami stood up. Now the saints

could understand why Swami had advised them to take two garlands with them. Swami had arrived to give his last Darshan to Shantibapa. All felt surprised with the divine talk of Swami.

It is said that the Rushies, sages could see the three phases of time: past, present and future, but as they are in the human form like ourselves, it is difficult to understand or recognise them. Pujya Jogi Swami could also see through the past, present and future with the grace of Maharaj and we have seen with our eyes many such incidents.

Exactly after two days, on 08-11-1996, Shreeji Maharaj along with the Nand saints came to take Shantibapa with him and Shantibapa departed for Akshardham doing Dhoon-Bhajan with Maharaj.

Twin Occasions

Dhirubhai Gandhi and Jaysukhbhai Gandhi, both are brothers from village Gir Gadhada, and very good devotees. Dhirubhai had two sons namely Bhupendra and Narendra. Jaysukhbhai also has two sons, Dinesh and Yogesh. There is a good unity amongst the family. Earlier they were living in Africa, now they are in England.

Despite living abroad, this family has served their motherland well. They have helped many developmental activities of Gir Gadhada. Dhirubhai was really like a shelter for the entire society. After departure of Dhirubhai for Akshardham, Jaysukhbhai has taken up that responsibility.

This family has got great affection and love for the service activities of Gurukul. The youths of this family living in England have unity and faith in Jogi Swami and other saints. Whenever

they venture for any task, they get blessings of Jogi Swami by a telephone call and thereafter only, they start that work.

Once Jaysukhbhai had cardiac trouble. His son Dinesh contacted Jogi Swami on telephone from London to get the blessings of Swami. After getting blessings, the by-pass surgery was done and with the grace of Shree Hari and blessings of Jogi Swami, it was a success.

A problem recurred after some time. The doctors advised for second by-pass surgery. This time it was a risky. Therefore, the family members were worried.

I was sitting in the office of Rajkot Gurukul. Dinesh contacted me on telephone from London. He was worried. He requested me to tell Jogi Swami to pray to Maharaj for success of the operation, as they were all worried.

I suggested to him to worship and pray Maharaj. I told him that I would speak about the situation to Jogi Swami. Saying this I put down the receiver. Immediately after that,

I received a telephone call from Ranchi.

Great devotee Kalyanjibhai Kamaliya lived in Ranchi (Bihar). Spiritually, he had achieved high state like King Janak. Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj was much pleased with him. He had studied the scriptures in depth. His body was tall and impressive.

With the grace of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, Kalyanjibhai had developed unshakable faith in Shree Hari. Whenever he sat to perform '*Mansi Pooja*' (mental worship), he would do it for half an hour as offer the meal to Shree Hari as if in presence. He had memorised big Vachanamruts in his old age. In his temple-like house, he had carried out the reading of almost all the religious scriptures along with his wife Kashibai.

Kalyanjibhai used to say, "Swami, for many years, our relation as husband and wife is over. Now she is the worshipper of the temple and I am a reader of the religious scriptures."

His life was like that of a sage. It was a source of inspiration even for the saints. His wife Kashibai was also in high state of spirituality and devotion. Bhagawan Shree Hari Himself had given him the Darshan and took her to Akshardham.

After the departure of his wife from this temporal world, Kalyanjibhai immersed himself in reading religious scriptures and in devotion. He had totally detached himself from the worldly affairs. At that time, he was ninety eight years old. Due to his old age, his health had deteriorated. His sons, Chandubhai and Pravinbhai desired their father to complete one hundred years. Not only that, the entire Gurukul family had wished him to celebrate his centenary in his presence as he was like a pillar of strength for the Gurukul. At the age of ninety eight, his health deteriorated a little. Chandubhai telephoned from Ranchi.

After talking to Dineshbhai on telephone to London, I was still in the office. I had a phone call by Chandubhai from Ranchi. He said, "Swami, father is not well nowadays. Please request Jogi Swami to pray to Shree Hari to lengthen his life for two years so that our desire to celebrate the centenary could be fulfilled." I consoled him on telephone and concluded the talk.

With the requests of the devotees of London and Ranchi, I went to Jogi Swami.

Jogi Swami was sitting on a jute bag spread on the sand behind Sadhu Ashram and was moving the Mala. Some devotees were reading scriptures by turn. As Jogi Swami wanted to go to urinal, he stood up and started walking with the help of a young Sadhu. I bowed to Swami and stood in front of him with the

gesture of salutation. Swami stopped for a while and asked me, "Do you want to say something?"

I said, "Swami, there was a call by Dinesh from London. Jaysukhbhai is not well. Bypass surgery is to be performed for the second time. Please pray to Maharaj so that he comes be normal."

Swami remembered Maharaj for some time and then said, "Tell them that they need not to worry. Tell them to recite 'Janmangal'. Maharaj would help."

I said, "Swami! There was a call from Ranchi. Chandubhai has informed that his father Kalyanjibhai is not well. If Maharaj would keep him healthy for another two years, they could celebrate his centenary."

Jogi Swami closed his eyes for some time and then he said, "Shastri! Kalyanjibhai is now prepared to leave for Akshardham. Shreeji Maharaj also does not intend to keep him in this world. Now none shall pray to keep him in this world but we shall pray for his happy departure for Akshardham."

I was surprised to hear the words that naturally came out from the mouth of Swami.

After two days, I received a telephone call from London. Dinesh informed me, "Swami, the operation has been successful. With the blessings of Jogi Swami the doctors have declared my father free of any danger and he is now feeling well." While talking to me on telephone, Dinesh was feeling himself fulfilled.

After two days, a telephone call from Ranchi also came. Chandubhai advised on telephone that Maharaj has taken his father to Akshardham. I told Chandubhai on telephone about the conversation I had with Jogi Swami in this matter. Then he was also wonderstruck.

I have heard and read about many accomplished Saints and Yogis who could see beyond the barriers of time and space but we feel great joy and surprise to see such a 'Paramhans' before our eyes.

Without doing any type of Yog-Sadhana, Jogi Swami has attained this divine state, only with the blessings of his Guru Mahant Swami, and devotion and Bhajan for Shreeji Maharaj.

Blessings... ..

Elections were about to be declared in Gujarat. The people were in a sweep of excitement to elect their representatives or to be elected as MLA. On the eve of the declaration of elections, Keshubhai, the leader of Bharatiya Janata Party, came for the Darshan of Jogi Swami. Jogi Swami was immersed in the worship of Maharaj. After doing Darshan, Keshubhai sat near Swami. Keshubhai is a politician of a remarkable merit. He has less of formal education but he has a deep understanding of the problems of the people. He has a great insight. He has always thought of doing well for the people.

Jogi Swami is a rare saint remaining ever immersed in Shreeji Maharaj. He did not know Keshubhai. He knows Maharaj only. While doing 'Pooja', he moved the Mala. Incidentally, on that day, a red lotus had bloomed in the garden of Gurukul. Jogi Swami has placed that flower at the feet of Shreeji Maharaj.

Before we could say anything or give introduction of Keshubhai, as if inspired by Shreeji Maharaj, Jogi Swami took that lotus flower in his hand, gave it to Keshubhai and said, "Maharaj will do good."

Swami is quite a different type of personality. He has nothing to do with politics. He has only the Murti of Shreeji Maharaj in his mind. He does not know BJP or Congress. He is also not knowing about the election nor he was aware that the Lotus was a symbol of BJP.

Keshubhai had come with the intention of getting the blessings of Swami. With the sudden shower of blessings by Jogi Swami, Keshubhai became overwhelmed with joy. He had tears of joy in his eyes. We all watched this divine sign with surprise.

I said, "Bhai, the saint has expressed the intention of Shree Hari. The people of Gujarat wish to have a change in Gujarat, and now the change is surely to take place."

Keshubhai bowed down to Swami with his folded hands. He sat for a while and then took leave.

With the blessings of Swami, the people's wish to have a change succeeded. The people's verdict came in favour of BJP and Keshubhai became the Chief Minister of Gujarat.

Named before Birth

Rugnathpur is a village blessed by great saint Gunatitanand Swami, an incarnation of Akshardham. The settlement of this village had done at the order of Gunatitanand Swami. A river flowed on the outskirts of this village. The people called it Dedumar River. Gunatitanand Swami said, "The word 'Mar' does not fit in the name of this nectar like River. Call it River 'Dedumer' from today. (In Gujarati language, 'MAR' means to kill or beat and 'MER' means compassion). This river would become the lifeline of the village. The water of the river will flow forever."

The river flowed with grace until now, making the words of Gunatitanand Swami true but the people have usurped the water with motor-pumps.

With the blessings of Gunatitanand Swami, the entire village is happy. The Satsang fellowship is in its full bloom. A *Mukhtaraj* Arjanbapa was born in this village. Shree Hari Himself had come to take him. The descendants of the family of Vira Sheladiya, who was having doubtless firm faith in Shree Hari, live in this village. This village has presented many great saints to Swaminarayan Sampraday. The temple of Swaminarayan is itself a Ramji Mandir in this village. The Aarti is performed at this place daily. The great capable saint Sadguru Balmukunddasji Swami has established the Murti of Hanumanji Maharaj here, who is known to have miraculous powers.

The daughters of this illustrious village have spread the Satsang in the families where they have gone after their marriages. The devotees of this village have unique oneness with the saints.

Babubhai Sheladiya is a leading Haribhakta devotee of this village. He has narrated in a letter to us about how a Sun of happiness has risen in his family with the blessings of Jogi Swami. It is as under:

Balubhai Sheladiya is the younger brother of Babubhai. Balubhai Sheladiya got married. With the grace of Shree Hari, he had two daughters.

However wise the householders are, they can not consider the daughters and sons equal. This is a widespread disease of our society. It is quite essential to free our society from such a disease.

Though Balubhai had two daughters, the entire family had a wish that he should have a son, but the luck was not favourable. The situation was like this. The son would take birth under the treatment of doctor but would die after two three hours. Such thing happened thrice.

The entire family was now in despair. Despite constant medical treatments, the situation could not be changed. Once, Babubhai, the elder of the family had an intuition that in Rajkot Gurukul, Jogi Swami is a much capable saint. If I request Jogi Swami, the wish of entire family would be fulfilled.

As such, the devotees of the village have great reverence for Jogi Swami. Many devotees have got water in their wells with the blessings of Jogi Swami and they have become more happy. Jogi Swami has visited this village frequently, hence everyone in this village knows Swami.

Babubhai came to Rajkot. He informed Jogi Swami and requested Swami to pray to Maharaj so that his brother could get a son. Jogi Swami remembered Shreeji Maharaj for some time and then said, "From now onward, stop taking medicines. Your brother and his wife should keep the vow of Hari Jayanti and both should move Mala with Swaminarayan Maha-Mantra. The wife of Balubhai shall sweep the floor of women's temple daily. Maharaj would give them two sons. After ten months from now, one boy would be born and thereafter in the next year, another."

After saying this, Swami gave him Kum-Kum, Chandan, Kanthi (rosary) and hallowed water. Swami said, "You may give this water to the boy to be born. Make a *Chandlo* of Kumkum and Chandan on the forehead of boy to be born and make him wear the Kanthi and give the name Ghanshyam to the first

child." Thus, Jogi Swami initiated a son into the Sampraday before his birth and gave him the name also.

Balubhai and his wife both observed the vow and as Swami has said, in the tenth month Ghanshyam was born. Thereafter, in the next year, another son was born who is named as Upendra. Ghanshyam is doing business now and Upendra is studying.

Balubhai has narrated one more thing in his letter. With the birth of Ghanshyam, the entire family was happy. All knew that Ghanshyam is born due to the grace of Jogi Swami. When the child became three months old, the family thought that the boy should be taken to Swami to bow down to him and a golden chain to be presented for the Thakoraji in the Pooja of Swamiji.

Babubhai, Balubhai and all the family members came to Rajkot. He let Ghanshyam have the Darshan of Swami. Again, Swami made him to wear a Kanthi and initiated him.

Babubhai presented a chain of gold to Jogi Swami for adorning the Murti of the God. Jogi Swami immediately said, "We can not accept it." Balubhai insisted much to accept it but Jogi Swami did not.

The greatness and glory of a true saint could be seen from such incidents. Any other person would make it a business but Jogi swami is a different kind of saint. He does not want anything from anybody. The honour, dignity or wealth never could shake him.

I do remember, whenever I happened to go to Rugnathpur with Swami, he invariably remembered Ghanshyam. Ghanshyam also used to come with a coconut and sugar crystals. Swami also happily says, "Shastri, this boy is given by Ghanshyam Maharaj."

Jogi Saved Life

We were in Africa to nourish and to spread the Satsang. After moving to places, we went to Eldoret. There we met an Ex-student namely Nanji Dhanji of Samatra (a village in Kutch area of Gujarat State). He had studied at Rajkot Gurukul many years ago. He came to know about our arrival at Eldoret. He became overwhelmed with joy. He immediately came to see us. He reminded old incidents. He also reminded the old rectors and saints. He asked about everybody. Thereafter, slowly he asked, "How is Jogi Swami?" We said, "He is well."

Remembering Jogi Swami, he became emotional. He told us an incident. "Swami, Jogi Swami has saved my life".

We eagerly asked, "How?"

Nanji said, "You may know about the collapse of Machchhu Dam of Morbi?"

We said, "Yes, we do know."

Nanji said, "At that time, the preparations for 'Brahma-Satra' were going on in Gurukul. There was a small vacation on the eve of Janmashtami. We three to four students were to go home in Kutch. There was a night bus. We had got our seats reserved. Before going to bus stand, I went for the Darshan of Jogi Swami.

Shreeji Maharaj must have inspired Jogi Swami, hence Jogi Swami patted my back said, 'Go in first Bus only, but do not go in second'. I relayed, 'Yes! Swami'. We directly went to the Bus stand. I took my seat in the first bus and started the journey, Few other boys from Kutchh also were to go to Kutchh. They too went for the Darshan of Swami. Swami denied them to go. Due to lack of understanding in childish age boys confused. However, they thought Swami may say no but we must go and

they went directly to the Bus Stand. When Jogi Swami came to know about it, he asked Kanu Bhagat to bring them back to Gurukul.

Nanji already have started in first Bus, another boys took seats in second Bus. Thereby Kanu Bhagat came and brought all of them back to Gurukul. That night it rained heavily. A dangerous thing happened. Machchhu Dam collapsed. The Morbi city and nearby villages were ruined. Thousands of people drowned. We came to know that the Bus, in which students were to travel, had drowned due to the flood.

"Swami, what would have been to us if we would have been in that Bus? Due to the kindness of Jogi Swami, we were saved." While talking, tears of gratitude trickled down the eyes of Nanji. He said, "Swami, I could not forget that incident. The God and the great saints protect the life of the people. Whenever I hear this, I remember that extraordinary incident of my life."

"After completion of my study, I left Gurukul but have not given-up the virtues derived from the Gurukul. I do 'Pooja-Path' daily. Though I live here abroad, I not do take wine and meat. With the grace of Maharaj and the saints like Swamiji I am happy and in good job. I have saved some amount from my salary. With that amount I want to serve food to the students of Gurukul." Thus, Bhagwan Shree Swaminarayan saved the life of all students on the words of Swamiji.

Do not Go to Dubai

Keshavji was a youth of Rajkot. By caste, he was a mason. He had a dream to go to Dubai to earn good money. He came in the contact of an agent of Dubai. He enticed Keshavji with promise to send him to Dubai. Passport was ready.

The Agent said, "You will have to pay Rs. 15,000/- to get work-permit of Dubai."

Apart from Keshavji, there were fifteen other persons ready to go to Dubai.

Keshavji was engaged in labour work. He had no money, yet anyhow, he managed to collect Rs. 15,000 /-. He was to go to pay Rs. 15,000/- at 8 o'clock at night. Keshavji thought to go for the Darshan of Jogi Swami before going to pay the money.

With colourful dreams of good earning in Dubai, Keshavji came for the Darshan of Jogi Swami. He had Rs. 15,000/- with him. He bowed down to Jogi Swami and said, "Swami! I want to go to Dubai and I am going to pay advance money for the same."

Swami said, "You are not to go to Dubai. Maharaj will give you good earning here."

For Keshavji it was like a jolt to a fast moving car of desires. He became deeply disappointed, as Swami said 'No'. His mind felt a sudden shock.

Jogi Swami noticed despair on the face of Keshavji. Therefore, he said, "Oh Keshu, if you could not believe me, then go to Maharaj and pick-up one chit out of two having written 'yes' and 'no' in it, before Maharaj. If Maharaj say yes, then go. Keshavji picked up a chit as Swami has advised. There was 'No' written in that chit.

Swami said, "Oh! If you can't believe me, then you must believe Maharaj."

'What to say and what to do' Keshavji was unable to decide. His dreams seemed to shatter. Keshavji returned with despair. He had intense desire to go to Dubai but as Swami said 'No' he became perplexed. He told everything to Vishwavihari Swami.

At that time, Brahma-Satra was going on in Rajkot. After finishing my discourse, I reached the office.

Vishwavihari Swami said to me, 'Swami, hear this man.' I asked, "What is the matter, Keshavji?" In the meanwhile, Keshavji cried. I took him inside the office and asked him, "Why are you crying?"

Keshavji said, "Swami, what shall I do? All the members of my family insist I should go to Dubai but Jogi Swami has advised otherwise". I asked him to be calm and said, "If Swami has denied, then surely there must be some sign from Maharaj. Therefore, you should give up your desire."

With my words, Keshavji gathered courage and firmly made up his mind not to go to Dubai.

Keshavji went home. After some time his friend came to see him. He was also going to deposit money for the work permit of Dubai. He asked, "Keshavji what are you doing here? Do you not want to come to deposit money?"

Keshavji said, "I don't want to go to Dubai. My Swami has advised me". That friend said, "Then I also want to ask Swamiji, whether I should go to Dubai or not."

Both friends came to Gurukul and met me near office.

Keshavji asked, "Swami, what should my friend do? Should he go to Dubai or not?"

I said, "Keshavji! We know you. You are familiar to us. Therefore, we can advise you. Your friend is not acquainted to us. We cannot tell him what should be done or what should not be done. He can decide as he wishes."

That friend of Keshavji also decided not to go to Dubai as his friend was not going. He gave up the plan to deposit

money. There was a batch of fifteen persons. Two of them thus decided not to go to Dubai. Remaining thirteen, deposited money for the work permit. That agent took them to Mumbai.

The father of Keshavji became angry as Keshavji decided not to go. He scolded him, "What have you decided? On the advice of Swamiji, you decided not to go to Dubai. What does Swami know about worldly affairs?"

On the next day, Keshavji came to Swami and said, "Swami, as I have decided not to go to Dubai, my father is angry with me and he has stopped talking to me."

Jogi swami said, "Don't worry. Your father will speak to you at his own accord."

In Mumbai, that agent took all those thirteen aspiring young men to an unknown place. He got their signatures on many documents. Then he asked them to sit there and wait for him. He went inside the building and never came out. Those thirteen men waited until evening. Then some ruffians rushed to that place and asked them to go away. The ruffians threatened them and made them flee. The deceptive agent had disappeared with money. All the thirteen young men came back to Rajkot with their dreams shattered. They met Keshavji and told them everything. Keshavji came hurriedly to see Jogi Swami and grabbed his feet and said, "Swami, you have saved me".

Swami said, "Oh! Maharaj has saved you; otherwise, you would have become the loser. Would you now believe my words? Maharaj would do well of you." Then Swami asked, "Keshu, has your father started talking to you now or not?"

Keshavji said, "Yes Swami, now he is also repenting."

Swami said, "Maharaj takes care of them who surrender to him. Therefore, follow the rules of Satsang firmly."

Keshavji is happy today. He works, earns and observes the rules of Satsang firmly.

Rahul Got Speech

With the grace of God and great saints the dumb can speak, the lame can climb mountains. With the grace of Jogi Swami, many dumb have got speech. Such live examples are there.

There was a student of Gurukul namely Mansukhbhai Kakani. He was peaceful and virtuous by nature. Moreover, he came to study in Gurukul; hence, his virtues bloomed like anything. After completion of his study, he got married.

He got one son namely Rahul. He was very handsome. He became four years old yet he was unable to speak. His parents were worried about it. Despite their best efforts and best treatments, Rahul was unable to speak.

At last, one day, Mansukh came to Jogi Swami. When he was studying in Gurukul, he used to come to Jogi Swami to read Vachanamrut. Therefore, Jogi Swami knew him very well. As Mansukh's nature was peace loving, Jogi Swami was kind towards him.

To have grace of a great saint is a very great achievement of life. Worldly wealth is not a means of getting the grace of a great saint but virtuous life, sacred nature and love for God are the means to get the grace of great saints. As the life of Mansukh was pious, Jogi Swami was very happy with him.

Mansukh came to Jogi Swami. Swami asked, "Why have you come?"

Mansukh said, "Swami, there is a request."

Swami asked, "Tell me, what it is?"

Mansukh said, "Swami, I have an only son. His name is Rahul. Though he is four years old, he does not speak. If you please kindly pray to Maharaj, Rahul may get his speech."

Jogi Swami gladly asked to bring holy water of Abhishek of Maharaj. He soaked his Mala in that holy water and said, "Take this holy water and make your son to drink it and utter Swaminarayan, Swaminarayan in his ear. Maharaj would do well."

Mansukh went home and made his son to drink that pious water and uttered 'Swaminarayan', 'Swaminarayan' in his ears. A miracle happened. On hearing the Mahamantra of Swaminarayan, Rahul got his speech. Rahul also started chanting Swaminarayan, Swaminarayan Maha-mantra with his father.

Water is only water but with the volition of a great saint, the water could become a true medicine. Rahul is a live example of the same.

Aeva re Jeevan Mukta Jogiya,

Jena Venere Vijaliyu Thay

Ughade Antarna Jone Agla

Bhitare Ajwala Thay

Meaning: (we have got) such a great saint on whose words, the lightening happens. The doors of the heart open up and (Divine) light fills the heart.

They would feel themselves ashamed

Once, a Katha Parayan of Bhagawat was going on in Mumbai. Due to great insistence of devotees, Swami had come to Mumbai. Swami had allergy for big cities like Mumbai. Whenever he came to know about going to Mumbai, he would feel dejected. He had a dislike to go to Mumbai. The wealth and grandeur of big cities could not attract the mind of a great saint. Swami does not like the cities as he likes small villages and natural places. The saint, in whose heart, the grandeur of the God resides, no wealth of the world can shake.

Once, Jogi Swami had to go to Mumbai with Shastriji Maharaj in a special train. The special train halted at Mumbai for three days but Jogi Swami never got down from the train nor he took water of Mumbai and not even fruits.

After the departure of Shastriji Maharaj for Akshardham, the devotees of Mumbai desired to have the Darshan of Swami. Once on behalf of all the devotees of Mumbai, Navinbhai Dave requested Jogi Swami to come to Mumbai. On hearing 'Mumbai', Swami cried like a child and said, "If you take me to Mumbai, I would not live in this world and would request Maharaj to take me to Akshardham". Navinbhai and other devotees became stunned like a stroke of shock. They had never anticipated such a reaction from Jogi Swami. All had tears in their eyes. With folded hands, Navinbhai Dave said, "Swami, please be calm. Please be pleased with us. We do not want to do anything that disappoints you." Then Swami became calm.

Years rolled by. The longing of loving devotees of Mumbai increased for the Darshan of Swami as anyhow Swami may

visit Mumbai once to give us happiness of his Darshan and to sanctify Mumbai with his footprints.

Bhagawan and great saints are always favour loving devotees. After the departure of Shastriji Maharaj for Akshardham, Swami has brought much change in his nature with grace to give happiness to the devotees.

With the constant requests of devotees of Mumbai, Swami agreed to visit that city. On getting this news, the devotees of Mumbai were overwhelmed with joy. A big assembly was organised to welcome and to have the benefit of Satsang of Jogi Swami. Jogi Swami arrived at the assembly. With his arrival, a wave of joy spread in the assembly, as if it rained nectar on the earth. As the magnet attracts the iron, the entire assembly was attracted towards Jogi Swami.

The assembly with the presence of Jogi Swami was symbolising the Divine assembly with the presence of Shree Hari. Jogi Swami sat in the assembly for some time. Meanwhile, Vihari Swami requested Jogi Swami to speak a few words as the devotees had been thirsting for his nectarine words.

Jogi Swami said with grace, "One may fly in the sky and can move in the ocean but without becoming a (true) devotee the Hell cannot be avoided". The devotees of Mumbai were very glad to hear few words of Jogi Swami. The learned people can talk for hours together but they cannot touch the inner hearts of the devotees. Jogi Swami has not given many discourses but his life itself is a great discourse of spirituality.

While returning to the lodging, Vihari Swami said to Swami, "Today you talked about an important thing".

Swami said, "Vihari, I wanted to tell something else."

Vihari Swami asked, "Swami, what else did you want to tell?"

Swami said, "One who loves the worldly pleasures and at the same time desires for salvation, is a great fool."

Vihari asked, "Then why did you not say that?"

Swami said, "One shall not tell such thing as most of the people in audience are of such nature. If we say this they would feel themselves ashamed."

Everyone laughed to hear this. Thereafter, with a laugh Swami said, "Vihari, if we talk in this way, many would become Saints. Therefore, we shall not talk much on the subject". Again all burst into laughter.

Swami's talk was full of discretion. His talk was also full of sarcasm on the vanity of wealthy and luxurious life of city dwellers. The great saints do not speak themselves but at times Maharaj Himself speaks through their hearts.

Stopped Vomiting ..

There was a woman devotee namely Jayaben in Rajkot. She had a great difficulty of health. She was unable to eat or drink anything because as soon as she would eat or drink anything, she had to vomit. Many treatments had failed to cure her. Her husband Natvarlal was much worried. He was in service of Darbar Vakhatsinhji of Raj Samadhiyala. Natvarlal explained his predicament to Darbar as; "Bapu, my wife has great difficulty. Despite many treatments, the vomiting does not stop."

Darbar Vakhatsinhji had great affection for Jogi Swami. He was fully aware of the divine power of Swami. He told

Natvarlal to come with him for the Darshan of Jogi Swami. He told that the problem would be solved with the blessings of Jogi Swami. Darbar Vakhatsinhji and Natvarlal came for the Darshan of Jogi Swami. Bapu appraised Jogi Swami about the plight of Natvarlal. Jogi Swami moved Mala for some time and then gave a Murti of Nilkanth Varni to Natvarlal and said, "Ask your wife to take food or drink after offering the same to this Murti. Maharaj would do well".

Natvarlal took that Murti from Jogi Swami and told his wife as advised by Jogi Swami. Jayaben also started to take food, milk, water etc. after offering it to the Murti of Nilkanth Varni. With the grace of Shree Hari and Jogi Swami the vomiting stopped.

Thereafter, Jayaben continued to observe the vow of taking food, water, milk etc. after offering the same to the Murti of Nilkanth Varni forever. While narrating the incident, her son Hasmukhbhai said, "My mother takes food or water after offering it to the Murti only. Whenever she has to go on a journey, she keeps with her the Murti and a small cup to offer water to the Murti. This Murti adorns our house even today. We regularly offer 'Thal' to the Murti."

The Secret of Anger

There is a big hall in front of Sadhu Ashram in Rajkot Gurukul at present. Earlier there was a big platform there. It was a place of worship and meditation for the saints.

One day in the evening, Pujya Jogi Swami was moving Mala here after covering his head with a cloth. In the meanwhile, Swami Bhaktiprakashdasji came there from outside. The saints

of Gurukul had a natural habit of doing 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami, whenever they came in or went out of the Ashram.

Purani Swami came from outside and sat near Jogi Swami. Jogi Swami had covered his head with a shawl. Purani Swami, with a view to draw the attention of Jogi Swami, repeatedly uttered, "Swami ! Jai Swaminarayan, Jai Swaminarayan ?" But Jogi Swami did not answer. Purani Swami was insistent to receive attention of Jogi Swami, so he again spoke somewhat in a louder tone, "Swami Swami,". Jogi Swami removed the shawl covering his face a little and said in somewhat angry tone, "Why are you repeatedly saying 'Swami Swami'. Please go away, " Most of the members of Gurukul family are aware of Jogi Swami's intense love for devotion. Therefore, if he says anything to anybody, nobody would take it otherwise. Instead they think that it is not good to displease Jogi Swami. There would be some reason for Jogi Swami to become angry.

Mostly Jogi Swami would not speak in this way. Jogi Swami is always graceful on few saints. Whenever they happened to be away from Gurukul, Swami used to remember them and whenever they came for the Darshan, Swami would become glad. Purani Swami Bhaktiprakashdasji is one such saint.

Jogi Swami used to remember Purani Swami many a times. Where would be Purani ? What could he be doing ? Swami would be glad whenever Purani Swami met him. Jogi Swami would welcome him gladly. But why did Jogi Swami speak in this way today ? No one could understand.

Later on what Jogi Swami himself told me was an extraordinarily divine thing.

There is a small room behind the office of Satsang Mandal. Pujya Jogi Swami stayed there. I went there to have the Darshan of Swami at night.

Jogi Swami said, “Shastri ! see this Purani ! What did he do ? I was moving Mala, Maharaj came and stood in front of me in His divine splendor. I was engrossed in the illuminating presence of Maharaj. At that time Purani Swami came. He spoke ‘Swami, Swami !’ and Maharaj disappeared. Thus Purani Swami disturbed me. Should I not be angry?” Thus the mystery of Swami’s becoming angry was revealed.

Cancer Cured ...

Lavjibhai Patel of Rajkot has an only son namely Mukeshbhai. Mukeshbhai, along with his family, had gone to attend a marriage ceremony. On their way back home, his wife Shardaben vomited twice or thrice. Blood was seen in the vomit. In view of the seriousness of the situation, Mukeshbhai brought his wife to Dr. Ashok Mehta of Rajkot for Medical check-up.

A primary check-up and blood report revealed that she was suffering from Cancer of sound box. The whole family was shocked and shaken with terror, as the cancer had reached third stage. The family of Mukeshbhai is financially sound hence, without losing courage; they got Shardaben checked up in the best pathological laboratory but the reports showed the same: cancer in third stage.

Thereafter, they decided to go to Mumbai for further check-up and diagnosis. They went to Tata Hospital in Mumbai. After required check-up and Lab-reports, the doctors of Tata Hospital also concluded that the cancer was in the last stage.

The whole sound box was affected by cancer and urgent operation was required.

The doctors said that the patient would live longer after operation but the sound box (*Swarpeti*) and the diet pipe will have to be removed and she could be fed with liquid food through a tube permanently fixed by making a hole in the throat. She will not be able to go out due to the fitting of tube in the throat.

Mukeshbhai asked the doctor, “What else can be done as an alternative?”

Doctors said that chemotherapy treatment can be given and resultantly the patient could live for one or two years.

On hearing the opinion of the doctors, the whole family became confused. They could not decide whether to choose between a painful longer life or a short life span for Shardaben, because the age of Shardaben was around thirty. She had one son and one daughter. Their lives were also to be taken into consideration.

At that time, Arvindbhai Dhami, a friend of Mukeshbhai said, “In Rajkot Gurukul, there is a great saint namely Jogi Swami. Let us talk to him about our problem. Then we shall do as per his advice”. The family of Mukeshbhai had heard the name of Jogi Swami but they had never met him. They accepted the advice of Arvindbhai and decided to go to Jogi Swami one day.

In those days, Jogi Swami lived in Dholara near Rajkot. One day, at about three O’clock in the afternoon, Mukeshbhai, Arvindbhai, Ashokbhai and Shaileshbhai Vyas came to Dholara to see Jogi Swami. After taking meals, Jogi Swami was sitting on a mat. A young saint was reading ‘Vachanamrut’ before him.

All the devotees, after doing Darshan of the Thakoraji, came to Swami. After conclusion of the reading of Vachanamrut, Swami gave 'Prasadi' of sugar crystals to all. Thereafter, he asked Arvindbhai about his well-being.

Arvindbhai gave introduction of Mukeshbhai to Jogi Swami and appraised him about the health condition of Shardaben, the wife of Mukeshbhai. Arvindbhai asked, "Swami, what shall we do? If we go for operation, she would get longer but painful life. If we do not get her operated, her life would be shorter. Her children are still young. We are unable to decide."

Swami said, "One gold-smith had cancer. He was operated and then he suffered for whole life. Therefore, you should give up the idea of operation. Bhagawan Swaminarayan would do well."

Saying this Jogi Swami gave him the 'Prasadi' of Sugar crystals and the blessed water of God's Abhishek (Bath) and gave them the vow of moving Mala and chanting of 'Swaminarayan' Maha Mantra. The grace of the great saint became fruitful. After six months, they got Shardaben checked up and took blood report. The doctors were astonished to see the reports. No cancer was found. The reports were clear and normal. Even today, Shardaben lives a normal life.

Groundnut Failed!...

Kutch and Kathiyawad areas mostly depend on rainy water. Therefore, the people of these areas eagerly wait for the rainy season. When the first shower starts, the hearts of the people fill with joy. The farmers worship the plough and the bullocks and sowing implements. Thus, they start the festival

of sowing. The land also gladly gives thousands time more than the seeds sown.

Once, such monsoon had started with graceful showers. There is a farm of Navinbhai Dave in Ribda village near Rajkot. Every year *Juwar* (one kind of corn) is sown in this farm for the cows of Gurukul. The farmers of nearby villages used to come voluntarily to serve here for the God. The saints and the workers would also help in this work. They used to plough the field themselves and whenever the rainfall started, they would sow Juwar. Thus, they got good amount of fodder for the cows of the Gurukul. Mostly, this responsibility was taken up by Kothari Harjivandasji Swami, Vasudev Swami and Narayanprasad Swami.

As such, Jogi Swami was totally detached from the dealings of the Gurukul but he took much care of the garden and the cows. Swami had served cows much with his guru Pujya Mahant Swami at Gondal Temple. His only motive was, the milk of the cows would be used for the service of the God and that would bring salvation of the cows.

As the number of saints and students of the Gurukul is big, the milk of the Gurukul Gaushala would not be sufficient. Therefore, milk is being bought from outside dairy etc. However, for the 'Thal' of the God, only the milk of Gaushala (Cowshed) is used.

From the ancient Vedic times, Gaushala has become an integral part of Gurukul. In those days, there was a big Gaushala in the Rajkot Gurukul. The saints and the students served the cows with zeal. Particularly the students of Kutch area liked this service very much. They were rather experts in such services. They preferred to serve the cows instead of sitting in the assembly. If they would be told to sit in the assembly, it would

be a punishment for them. However, if they were entrusted the service of the cows, they would be very glad as if they had received a prize.

Jogi Swami was inspired the farmers of surrounding villages of Rajkot to sow *Juwar* as cattle feed for the cows. On the words of Jogi Swami, the farmers would sow *Juwar* with reverence and would send '*Kadab*' (cattle feed) for the cows of the Gurukul. The devotees of Amreli and Una area also sent fodder for the cows.

Navinbhai Dave had a farm of 30 bighas (Bigha - a unit of measurement of land) in Ribda. On that farm, the crop of *Juwar* would yield quite much. In that year, the disciples of Pardi, Gundasara said to the saints that, 'It would be good if we sow groundnut'. The saints also decided to sow groundnut instead of *Juwar*.

The saints thought that Ribda being near Rajkot, the saints and the students could go to eat roasted green groundnuts and it could also be used as '*Falahar*' on the day of fast.

Mostly the saints would ask Jogi Swami as to what to sow in the field and Jogi Swami would make them to sow *Juwar* for the purpose of fodder for the cows.

Enthusiastic saint Narayanprasad Swami decided to sow groundnut. He took with him the seeds and the volunteers and reached Ribda. He completed the sowing of groundnut in the field of 30 Bighas.

After completion of the work of sowing, Narayanprasad Swami returned to Gurukul and went for the Darshan of Jogi Swami.

Jogi Swami asked him, "O Sadhu! Where have you been today?"

Narayanprasad Swami could presume that Jogi Swami would rebuke him for sowing groundnut, hence he replied with hesitation, "Swami, I had gone to the Ribda farm."

Jogi Swami asked, "What have you done there?"

In a hesitating voice Narayanprasad Swami replied, "Swami, groundnut seeds are sown there."

Jogi Swami asked, "Who had asked you to do that? Why have you not sown '*Juwar*'? You should have asked me before sowing such costly seeds."

Then Narayanprasad Swami also repented. With folded hands, he frankly said, "Swami, all were of the opinion to sow groundnut. Had we asked you and you denied, then we could not sow groundnut, hence we did not come to ask you and sowed groundnut."

With full compassion in his heart, Jogi Swami said, "Sadhu, do you know? There would be no rain for one month. How would the groundnut grow? Now eat groundnuts, if you can? Oh my Sadhu! What objection you had in sowing '*Juwar*' for the cows?"

Narayanprasad Swami was stunned. The costly seeds were sown in the land. There was no possibility to change that now.

It happened exactly as Jogi Swami has said. The able saint could see the signs of future. The first rainfall occurred but thereafter for a month, there was no rain and resultantly the crop could not grow. The costly seeds were lost. If *Juwar* would have been sown, it would have been ripened with little rain. The groundnut crop failed and the fodder also could not be grown.

At that time, I was present in Rajkot. I could remember that Jogi Swami had rebuked Narayanprasad Swami for sowing groundnut.

Thousands of salutations to the saint, who could see in the heart of the future!

New Life to Ramji Khimani

Ramjibhai Khimani of village Dahisara now lives in London. He is a good devotee. He had come into contact of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj in 1969 in Mombasa (Africa). Since then he had connected his life with a true saint. Thereafter he settled in London. His help in the development of Gurukul is unique. In almost all the Gurukuls, the water tanks are built with his financial help.

As such, the health of Ramjibhai was quite good. He had never felt sickness. After all, every human being is subject to sickness. Once he suffered a heavy brain-stroke, resultantly he became unable to walk or talk. Immediately he was admitted in a hospital.

Kantibhai and Kishorbhai, the sons of Ramjibhai were much worried about the condition of their father. Kantibhai remembered Jogi Swami. He contacted Rajkot Gurukul on telephone. I was in the office at that time. As the telephone call came, Jogi Swami came into the office. While talking to Jogi Swami about the condition of his father, Kantibhai burst into tears.

Jogi Swami consoled him on telephone and said, "All the members of your family shall recite Janmangal Stotra. We are also praying to Shreeji Maharaj. Shree Hari would protect Ramjibhai. Don't worry."

Shree Hari heard the prayer of Jogi Swami. There was visible improvement in Ramjibhai's health. This was contrary to the prediction of the doctors. Slowly the body of Ramjibhai became active. Life pulsated through hands and feet. He regained speech. The doctors, treating Ramjibhai, were wonderstruck. In a loud tone they said, 'Miracle! Miracle! Really, with the grace of Shree Hari, a miracle had happened.'

The doctors said, "Whatever progress is seen is not only due to the medicines, but also due to the prayer to Shree Hari. Prayer is a panacea for the sick."

With the blessings of Jogi Swami, Ramjibhai became as normal as he was before illness.

Within a week, after Ramjibhai suffered the brain stroke, we happened to go to U.K. and America. When we reached London, Ramjibhai was still in hospital. We went to see him in the hospital. Jogi Swami had sent sugar crystals of 'Prasadi' and a new 'Kanthi' for Ramjibhai. We gave it to Ramjibhai and said, "With the prayer of Jogi Swami, Maharaj has given you a new life, hence Swami has sent a new Kanthi and sugar crystals as a symbol of joy of new life."

Ramjibhai accepted 'Prasadi'. He shed tears of joy. His entire family became very glad.

Govindbhai Bhudiya of Madhapar is a close friend of Ramjibhai. He is a very good and helpful devotee. In the grave situation of Ramjibhai, he served him sincerely, until he became normal. He also consoled the family members of Ramjibhai in the hour of their trial. When Govindbhai narrated the situation of Ramjibhai, when he suffered a brain stroke, we were surprised as to how safely he has come out from his grave illness with the blessings of Jogi Swami. The blessings worked as an accurate medicine.

When Ramjibhai came out of 'coma', he started uttering 'Swaminarayan', 'Swaminarayan'. When he regained speech, he said, "Shreeji Maharaj, Jogi Swami and great saints were constantly with me. Due to their grace, I have survived." Thereafter Ramjibhai became as healthy as he was before brain-stroke.

Even today, whenever Ramjibhai remembers his situation when he suffered a brain-stroke, he becomes overwhelmed with feelings and says, "My life now, is due to the grace of Shreeji Maharaj and Jogi Swami, otherwise there was no life in this body at that time."

Paso was Awakened

Kanabhai Vekariya lived in village Makhavad. He had a son namely Parshottam. The whole village called him 'Paso'. His body was stout but the centre of sleep in his mind was stronger. Anyhow, he was so sleepy as if he were a reincarnation of 'Kumbhakaran' (a brother of 'Ravana'). He used to sleep for days together. He could sleep anywhere - at home or outside, in any season or weather condition. Any effort to wake him up would fail, even if buckets of cold water were poured on him, he would not wake up. The Goddess of sleep had a powerful spell on him, and he was unable to escape from the same. It was difficult to locate him when he went outside his home and got lost in sleep. None could believe that such human being could exist! However, here the whole village was a witness to the unusual sleeping hours of Parshottam. When would he sleep? Where would he fall in sleep? When would he wake up? Even master astrologer was unable to answer.

Kanabhai tried many treatments to remove the unusual sleep of his son Parsottam. However, medicines failed. Many efforts were made in vain to free Parshottam from the unusual malady. Family members were tired of remedies.

In the meanwhile, Jogi Swami arrived in Makhavad. The family members of Parshottam said to Mokubha, "Please request Swami to shower his kindness to remove the unusual sleeping hours of Parshottam."

Darbar said, "Bring him to Jogi Swami".

Two persons brought Parshottam before Jogi Swami. At that time also, Parshottam was drowsy.

Mokubha requested, "Swami, do something for this 'Pasa'."

Swami asked, "What is his problem?"

Mokubha apprised Swami of the unusual sleep of Parshottam.

Jogi Swami remembered Shreeji Maharaj and sprinkled holy water of 'Prasadi' on 'Pasa' and said, "Now your sleep has gone away. Go for the Darshan of Hanumanji daily and clean the temple daily. Hanumanji would cure you."

From that day, the unusual sleep of 'Pasa' has gone. Since then 'Paso' went for the Darshan of Hanumanji every day. He cleans the temple daily. He helps in routine activities of temple enthusiastically. He is now agile and lively like Shree Hanumanji. For the people of Makhavad the sleep of Parshottam was a wonder, now removal of his sleep has become an equal wonder.

Mokubha has narrated this incredulous incident himself.

Almost all the living beings live in deep sleep of delusion.

Bhoomanand Swami says, "Oh Jivas! Awake from the deep sleep of delusion and marry to the God to become fulfilled forever!"

As the darkness disappears with the rising of Sun, with the grace and contact of great saint, the Sun of understanding and wisdom rises and the darkness of ignorance and illusion disappear. The deep sleep of 'Jivas' vanishes away. The great saints awaken the souls from slumbering delusion. Jogi Swami is such a great saint who, with his sight only, removes the deep sleep of delusion of several people. Removing the sleep of 'Pasa' is quite easy for such a saint.

Unique Style of 'Kanthi'

Tying 'Kanthi' is a unique tradition in the Swaminarayan Sampraday. It is done by a pious saint to enable a soul to have the shelter of God. Jogi Swami has tied 'Kanthi' to thousands of devotees so far. During his visit to U.S.A. Jogi Swami has tied the Kanthi to approximately one thousand people. During his moving in the villages, he has tied 'Kanthi' to innumerable people, awarding them the shelter of God.

Many ties the Kanthi but the style of Jogi Swami to tie Kanthi is unique.

Normally, if someone would tie a 'Kanthi', he would be puffed up with an unspoken pride of being a preceptor. He looks upon the initiated as his disciple and custom of give and take would start. The preceptor would expect respect and worship from his disciple.

However, for Jogi Swami, it is altogether a different thing. The Swami has endless compassion in his heart for the souls. Therefore, Swami would feel that by tying a 'Kanthi', if a soul

comes under the shelter of God, he would be saved from hell and the cycle of birth and death.

The only way to get rid of hell and the cycle of birth and death is to surrender to the God. Whenever a soul comes under the refuge of God, Swami is glad. Whenever Jogi Swami ties 'Kanthi' to a devout, he would be glad to award refuge of God to a soul. No worldly relation of preceptor and disciple. No custom of give and take. After entrusting the soul to the God, he would not come in-between.

May he be much tired or asleep, if anybody comes to get tied a 'Kanthi', he would gladly rise up and tie a 'Kanthi' to the devout, to take him under the refuge of the God.

Gunatitanand Swami has said, "If a soul is brought under the shelter of the God, it is equal to the merit gained by saving the whole universe."

Under any type of adverse health condition, Jogi Swami has never shown his unwillingness or tedium in the matter of tying a Kanthi.

To bring the souls under the refuge of the God, is an important duty of a saint and Jogi Swami has nicely done this work during his entire life.

Jogi Swami likes to do devotion in solitude. He does not like crowds around him. Earlier, he kindly sat in the group of devotees. Thereafter, he used to remain engrossed in the devotion in a small closed room. He would not like anybody near him. The devotees of our country and abroad as well, ever like to have his Darshan and to touch his feet from near but how would it be? If any saint brings anybody to Jogi Swami, he would immediately ask, "Why have you brought him? Get him out. These people do not let me do devotion peacefully."

All were in dilemma but they found a trick. One, who wishes to have 'Darshan' of Swami, would go to Vishwavihari Swami and other serving saints and would say, "Swami, this is a devout fellow, he and his son want to be tied a 'Kanthi' by Jogi Swami". Jogi Swami would immediately remove the cloth from over the face, would gladly give water in the hands of the devout, and would chant the Mantra 'Kal, Maya, Pap, Karam...' and would tie a 'Kanthi'. He would also give 'Prasadi' of sugar crystals and the devout person would feel himself lucky and fulfilled.

Thus, many people have got 'Kanthi' tied many a times. Jogi Swami has said many a times that those who have received 'Kanthi' at his hands, will never attain hell. The saint has abundance of divinity and good will. His spiritual reservoir can never be exhausted. Due to his inexhaustible devotion for God, he never hesitates to bless the devout. He is full of self-confidence due to total confidence in the God.

Mysterious Nose Trouble

Doctor Nandlal K. Manseta is a renowned doctor of Ahmedabad. He is totally dedicated to the service of humanity. He has done several service works. His rates for the services are reasonable and humanitarian. He gives free services to children and poor people. He has established an ideal hospital in the city. This hospital is doing a tremendous job to save children from becoming deaf and dumb, which is creating a unique impression in Gujarat State.

This service-loving doctor has got unique respect and love for Gurukul and its saints. Whenever he receives a message of Bal Swami, he rushes immediately to the Gurukul.

Whenever he gets a chance to serve the saints or the students, he becomes very glad.

Once Jogi Swami was in Ahmedabad Gurukul and he had some pain in his nose.

Jogi Swami acted like a child and asked Vihari Swami to see whether there was anything in the nose causing pain.

Vihari asked, "What has happened?"

Jogi Swami explained that at the time of smelling a flower something must have entered into the nose, which is causing the pain. Jogi Swami is fond of smelling flowers of Mogra or Rose offered to the God. Sometimes he would keep the flower in the nose. Vihari Swami looked in the nose of Jogi Swami but he could not see anything there. He said, "Swami, there is nothing in your nose".

Jogi Swami said, "It has reached upward, hence you can't see it. Bring a fork."

Vihari Swami brought a fork and moved it here and there and said, "Swami, there is nothing in your nose."

Swami said, "You will not be able to see or take it out with the fork. Call a doctor. He must have a big fork and he will be able to pick it out."

All laughed on hearing this conversation between Jogi Swami and Vihari Swami. The saints felt that there would be some pain in Swami's nose. Vihari Swami informed Bal Swami that Swami was experiencing some pain in his nose. Bal Swami telephoned Manseta Saheb.

Manseta Saheb said that he would come to Gurukul straight from the hospital.

Due to good nature of the doctor Manseta, there remains great rush of patients at his hospital. Dr. Manseta would never disappoint any patient.

He attended every patient who came to seek his treatment up to 10:00 p.m. and when he reached Gurukul, it was 10:30 p.m.

Jogi Swami is used to go to sleep early as per his daily routine. On that day also, Swami had gone to sleep early. Bal Swami, with a great tenderness, awakened Jogi Swami and said to him, "You had some pain in the nose, hence the doctor has come."

Jogi Swami said, "I don't have any pain in the nose."

Bal Swami thought that, as Swami has great dislike for allopathic medicine, he was denying having any pain in his nose. Hence, Bal Swami said, "Swami, let him examine your nose. He would not give any medicine, which can displease you. He is service loving and serving our saints much. He serves the people also."

Swami said, "He is doing good service. Let him continue his service for the people. Ask him whether he is wearing 'Kanthi'. Has he come under the shelter of God?"

The words of Swami had a profound spiritual significance. All the activities should be with the relation to the God. Every service activity must be suffused with God. Service without relation with God, it is of little use.

With folded hands Manseta Saheb said, "Swami, I have not been tied 'Kanthi'."

Swami got the wave of grace and became eager to tie 'Kanthi' to the doctor, hence he said, "Oh Balkrishna! Bring a 'Kanthi'. I want to tie it to the doctor. Hurry up or else I would tie him my own 'Kanthi'."

One saint hurriedly went to bring a 'Kanthi'. Meanwhile Bal Swami said, "Swami! Give him your own 'Kanthi' to wear."

Jogi Swami immediately took out a 'Kanthi' wearing around his own neck and tied it around the neck of Dr. Manseta and he brought him under the divine shelter.

This was an extraordinary event. Swami has invited thousands of people into the Sampraday but none had the fortune of having 'Kanthi' of Jogi Swami himself until then.

Dr. Manseta was charged with emotion. He said, "Swami! Today I have got the fruit of my entire service to the humanity. You have tied me your own 'Kanthi'. How fortunate I am! I came to remove your pain. Instead, you have removed my pain! How compassionate you are! You have showered much compassion upon me. It seems that you feigned the pain in the nose to remove my pain."

The actions of great saints are unfathomable. In the morning, he created a pretext of pain in the nose, and at night, he brought a good soul under the shelter of God, as if he had acted in this way for the benevolence of a good doctor.

Today Dr. Manseta Saheb, eloquently expressing the elevating experience of 'Kanthi', says, "From the moment, Swami tied a 'Kanthi' to me, I am having pious volitions only and whatever I wish, Bhagawan Swaminarayan fulfils. With the grace of Jogi Swami I am very happy."

The fruit of the faith

(Shree Madhubhai Barbhaya is a renowned journalist who has rendered his services as co-editor of Phulchhab, Sandesh etc. Newspapers. His own experience in his own words is given here under).

In shaping, progress and upliftment of my life, the blessings, inspiration and guidance of Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan, Rev. Shastri Shree Dharmajivandasji Swami, Pujya Kothari Swami, Shree Devkrishnadasji Swami, Pujya Shastri Shree Madhavpriyadasji Swami and other saints have played an important role.

I am a graduate in science and a journalist. The science and journalism are naturally associated with the reality and rationalism. There is no place for miracle and such other things in it. Though the science and faith are different things, yet my experience says something else. The faith and science are like the soul and the body. There is no restriction or limitation for the soul but the body has several limitations and restrictions.

I used to visit Swaminarayan Gurukul, Rajkot for the 'Darshan' and to listen to the discourses of Param Pujya Dharmajivandasji Swami. I had continued this tradition even after Shastri Shree Dharmajivandasji's departure for Akshardham. In the meanwhile, I was suffering from headache. Despite treatment by expert Neuro-surgeon and Neuro-physicians, the headache continued. Respected relative of me, Shree Rameshbhai Soni, residing at Mumbai, took an appointment of the famous Neuro-physician of our country Dr. Singhal for me and called me to Mumbai. Dr. Singhal examined

me and advised that the medicines prescribed by the doctors of Rajkot are proper and if you continue the same, you get relief.

Despite continuing the treatment, there was no relief in my headache. In the meanwhile, I went to Rajkot Gurukul for the Darshan of Bhagawan Swaminarayan and the saints. When I met Pujya Madhavpriyadasji Swami and Pujya Devkrishnadasji Swami, both of them told me that I was not attending Gurukul frequently. At that time I told them about my headache, Pujya Madhavpriyadasji Swami said, 'Don't worry, Maharaj would do good'.

When I asked for the permission to leave the Gurukul, Pujya Madhavpriyadasji Swami told me, 'Come with me. Let us go for the 'Darshan' of Pujya Jogi Swami'. We went to Jogi Swami. Pujya Madhavpriyadasji Swami said, "Swami, Madhubhai is suffering from chronic headache, which could not be cured despite prolonged treatment."

On hearing this, Jogi Swami said, "It will be cured. Please wait". Thereafter Jogi Swami gave water of God's Abhishek in a bottle and told me, 'Take this, and drink a spoonful of this every day. Also take this 'Prasadi' of sugar crystals daily and at night, swallow six corns of white pepper daily remembering the name of the God."

As per the instruction of Jogi Swami, I took a spoonful of blessed water and sanctified 'Prasadi' of sugar crystals. A miracle happened. The very first day of taking the blessed water, I was relieved of headache. Since then I have never experienced any kind of headache. I am a living example of what blessings and faith together can do! This experience has become a happy remembrance of my life.

Go and Bring a Coconut

Jogi Swami occasionally visited village Gundasara and usually arranged 'Dhoon' of 24 hours once in a year. This routine continued for almost twenty years.

During the continuation of incessant Dhoon (*Akhand Doon*), Jogi Swami would chant Dhoon for the whole night standing before the Murti of the Maharaj, to inspire the devotees for chanting Dhoon.

In Gundasara, Jogi Swami has removed the sufferings of many people and has made them happy.

Jivrajbhai Muljibhai Sojitra of Gundasara had a pathetic problem. His infant children died soon after they took birth. He appraised Puja Jogi Swami about this problem. Jogi Swami asked him to bring a coconut. Jivrajbhai brought one coconut and gave it to Jogi Swami. Swami tore a piece of his 'Dhoti' and wrapped the coconut in it. He gave it back to Jivrajbhai and said, "Take this to your home and preserve this. After completion of twelve months, break it. Maharaj would give you two sons."

After twelve months, the coconut was broken. The coconut was as fresh as it was twelve months ago. As per the words of Jogi Swami, Jivrajbhai got two sons, one by one namely Vinod and Nautam. Thus, on the words of Jogi Swami, coconut brought good luck to Jivrajbhai.

This Field Could Be a Farm

Once, Jogi Swami was coming from Rib to Gundasara in a cart. On the way, ahead of Ribda station, he reached near the temple of Khodiyar Mataji. Swami saw a field and asked, "Whose farm is this?"

The disciples said, "Swami, this field belongs to Popatbhai Barasiya."

Swami said, "This field could be a farm".

After coming to Gundasara, Swami called Popatbhai and said, "Your field, which is near the road to Ribda, can become a farm. So dig a well. Maharaj will give you water."

Popatbhai said, "Swami, if this is your command I would start the job of digging the well. You please come to my field and tell me where I should dig the well." Swami compassionately went to the farm of Popatbhai. Moving here and there for some time in the field, Swami said, "Here, at the edge of the road, dig a well". As per the instruction of Swami, a well was dug and due to the blessings of Maharaj and Swami, there was a lot of water in the well. Thus, in the Gundasara village, Jogi Swami has examined many fields and shown the place where to dig and with the blessings of Maharaj, many farmers have dug wells and have got plenty of water therein.

Whenever Jogi Swami visited Gundasara, he used to stay there for fifteen to twenty days and after waking up of Thakoraji (Murti of the God), he used to go to the farm of different Haribhaktas for taking bath. He used to offer the fruit to the Thakoraji and used to meditate.

Whenever Swami would visit any farm, the people from nearby farms would gather and Swami would preach them. Thus, Swami strengthened 'Satsang' by moving from farm to farm in village Gundasara.

Tie a Millet-paste on the Stomach

This incident occurred fifty years ago. Jogi Swami had come to Gundasara. Whenever Swami visited Gundasara, he stayed there for many days. The temple would remain full of Haribhaktas. They would do 'Dhoon-Bhajan' daily.

Swami used to remove difficulties of Haribhaktas. Once eight or ten months old son of Popatbhai Karshanbhai became seriously sick. His situation became critical. The village people gave different advices to Popatbhai but Popatbhai firmly said, "I don't want to go for any superstitious treatment. At present Jogi Swami is in the temple of our village. I would take my son Magan to him only." After saying this, he brought his son to the temple and appraised Jogi Swami in detail.

Swami said, "Nothing is to worry about. Tie the flour of millet on the stomach of this child. God will cure him."

Gripping the hand of that little child Magan, Swami gave him 'Vartaman', did *chandlo* on his forehead, tied a Kanthi and said, "Now go and take him home".

As per the instruction of Swami, the paste of flour of millet was tied on the stomach of Magan. Then within some time, he felt well. The little child started drinking milk.

Now what is this type of medicine of Swami that only God knows! However, the whole village could see Magan completely cured miraculously.

Starting of Sugarcane Festival

There would not be any student, who had studied in Gurukul and would not remember sugarcane festival.

The sugarcane festival means to go to eat sugarcane in the nearby villages of Rajkot like Gundasara, Dholara, Pardi, etc. The loving disciples of all these villages sow sugarcane especially for the students and the saints of Gurukul and invite whole Gurukul family from time to time to celebrate sugarcane festival.

The Saints and the students happily go to those disciples' farms and for the whole day have fun, play, Kirtan and Satsang while eating sugarcane. Almost six hundred to seven hundred students remain on sugarcane for the whole day. Therefore, it was a religious entertainment for a number of saints and the students.

From every house of the village, the '*Rotlas*' (thick loaf) of millet and buttermilk would be supplied in bulk. Here in the farm, Bhandari Swami would prepare *Khichdi* (Hotchpotch) and *Kadhi* (curry) with *Bhajiya* of the sugarcane juice. Everybody would take lunch on the farm only. The devout of the village would gather and do Satsang with the saints.

Thus, the whole day would pass in joy and singing. The day would pass delightfully and sugarcane festival would have a profound impression on the young and old who participate in it. The celebration of sugarcane festival gives relief from the daily routine of Gurukul and makes the students and the saints lively for some time.

The celebration of sugarcane festival started from Gundasara village. Nearly thirty five to forty years ago, Jogi

Swami had come to village Gundasara. It was winter. After waking of the 'Thakorji' in the afternoon, Jogi Swami went to different farms daily to take bath and to do meditation there. Thus, he was strengthening the virtues of Satsang among the village people.

One day Swami came to the farm of Karshanbhai Barasiya. There was excellent crop of white sugarcane there. Seeing this yield Swami said, "Karshanbhai, this '*Deshi*' (a kind of sugarcane) sugarcane is very good, worth to serve to the saints and students." On hearing the words of Swami, Karshanbhai became very happy. He said, "Swami, if this sugarcane can be used for serving to the saints and the students, then it would be my great fortune. Now please invite everybody here as soon as possible and organise sugarcane celebration."

Jogi Swami said, "You may go to Gurukul and talk to Purani Swami Premprakashdasji and offer invitation". Karshanbhai and four other loving devotees of the village went to Gurukul next day and talked to Purani Swami about their volition. They gave a cordial invitation to the saints and the students of Gurukul to participate in sugarcane festival. Incidentally, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj was in Rajkot at that time. Purani Swami talked to him.

Seeing the devotion of these disciples, Gurudev became happy, accepted the invitation, and said, "Purani prepare for sugarcane celebration in Gundasara, so that these disciples and students can enjoy."

Purani Swami said, "Ok Swami! On the holiday of the next Sunday we shall go to Gundasara for the sugarcane celebration."

When this news reached village Gundasara, the small village was delighted. Waves of joy swept over the small population of the village.

On Sunday, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, Purani Swami, Kothari Swami, other saints and the students came to the farm of Karshanbhai in Gundasara for the Sugarcane celebration.

Jogi Swami was present there since the beginning. The whole day was full of joy. All the disciples of the village became very happy. The whole day passed in joy and festivity. All the devotees experienced extreme joy.

Thus on the words of a pious saint Jogi Swami, celebration of Sugarcane festival started. Thereafter every year the celebration of sugarcane festival continued. After the auspicious start at Gundasara, the devotees of Pardi, Dholara etc. villages also started to invite the saints and the students of Gurukul to celebrate 'Sugarcane festival'.

There is no Water

Jogi Swami has made the devotees of Gundasara very happy. Once he had come to Gundasara. While going to a farm for taking bath at noon, Swami saw a new well being dug at the edge of the road. Swami asked, "Who is digging the well?"

The accompanying disciples said, "Swami, Hardasbhai is digging the well."

Swami said, "Let's go there."

Swami came to Hardasbhai's farm at his own will. He saw the stones scattered over there and said, "There is no water at that place. Come with me, and I will show the place where the water is there". Saying this Swami walked a little in the

farm, suggested to dig at the place situated at the lower end of the farm, and added, "Start digging on Saturday". The well was dug as per the advice of Jogi Swami. With the grace of Shree Hari and Jogi Swami, water was found in abundance.

Last Farewel to Mulji Bhagat

Mulji Bhagat of Gundasara means a staunch disciple of God. Bhagat had great faith and devotion towards Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, Purani Premprakashdasji Swami and Jogi Swami. He was in very high state of spirituality. Many divine incidents related to his strong devotion had occurred in his life.

Whenever Mulji Bhagat came for the Darshan of Jogi Swami at Gurukul, he used to bring one can of cow milk from his home. Jogi Swami also, being pleased, used to instruct the saints to preserve the milk for serving to 'Thakoraji' in the evening. Thus, Jogi Swami was much pleased with Mulji Bhagat.

Once, Jogi Swami had come to Gundasara. As Mulji Bhagat wished to give '*Rasoi*' (to arrange a meal for the saints), he requested Jogi Swami to prepare '*Rasoi*' on his behalf the next day. Swami said, "Tomorrow we are to go to village Rib, hence we would not stay".

There was a desire in the mind of Bhagat that it would be better if Swami could stay to accept his feast. With this desire, after the God went to sleep, Bhagat started doing 'Dandvat' (Prostration). He continued to do 'Dandvat' up to two o'clock in the night.

When Jogi Swami woke up in the night for going to the toilet, he saw Bhagat doing Dandvat continuously.

Swami asked, "Bhagat! Are you still doing 'Dandvat Pranam'?"

Bhagat said, "Swami, I am praying to Maharaj so that you could stay tomorrow".

Seeing such a great devotion of Bhagat, Swami said, "Bhagat, we will stay tomorrow. Now stop Dandvat Pranam."

In 'Upanishad' there is a story of a cart-driver namely 'Raikv' sitting under the cart. Though he was a simple and straightforward farmer, he was having a treasure of spiritual knowledge. On seeing his body, his clothes and his manners, none could see a great soul hidden behind those unimpressive clothes. In fact, truth needs no ornaments for shining.

Mulji Bhagat can be compared with ancient Raikv. Perhaps we can say that Raikv was having the treasure of knowledge only, while Mulji Bhagat was having the treasure of knowledge and devotion. His life was worth inspiring to the saints also.

We hear the talk regarding Parvatbhai and such other '*Muktas*' (souls free from Maya) during the time of Bhagawan Shree Hari. Mulji Bhagat could also be considered a parallel to those Muktas.

Once, Mulji Bhagat became sick. Bhagat had never pampered his body. Whenever he became sick, he did not take any medicine from any doctor. Due to some disease of brain, his memory power was reduced. His body below the waist was totally paralysed. Despite unbearable pain, Bhagat was quite happy.

When Jogi Swami came to know that Mulji Bhagat was seriously ill, he decided to go to Gundasara to give Darshan to Mulji Bhagat. At that time, one Haribhakta came to have the

Darshan of Swami. He placed 'Chikus' (one kind of fruit) before the 'Thakoraji' of Swami.

Swami said, "Vihari! Take these 'Chikus' with us. Bhagat is sick, so we want to take them for him." In these words, the affection of Swami towards Bhagat was evident.

Swami came to Gundasara along with the saints. Swami placed the garland of Prasadi, around the neck of Bhagat, placed his hand on the head of Bhagat, said Jay Swaminarayan and gave him sanctified offering (*Prasadi*) of 'Chikus'.

Mulji Bhagat, in intermittent words said, "Swami, you have showed a great compassion for me".

Swami put his hand on head of Bhagat and asked, "Bhagat, how are you?"

If somebody else would have been in place of Mulji Bhagat, he would not have been able to bear the pain, which was excruciating. However, Mulji Bhagat who was like an ocean of patience and self-realisation (*Aatma-Nishtha*), said, "Swami, It is a great kindness of Maharaj to me, that the body below the waist is paralysed, hence I am relieved from taking any care. In the part of body above waist, there is the heart, in which the constant remembrance of Maharaj is going on and it is a great pleasure for me." The heads of the listeners must have bowed down at the feet of Mulji Bhagat.

After this little conversation, there was complete silence. Swami and Mulji Bhagat both silently looked at each other for a long time. This silent conversation was really wonderful, rarely understood. The complete divine peace prevailed all around.

Jogi Swami sat near Bhagat for a long time. At last, breaking this silence, Swami told the devotees around, "After two days, Maharaj would take Mulji Bhagat to Akshardham."

Swami then, took leave and exactly after two days, Shree Hari took Mulji Bhagat to Akshardham.

There are many divine incidents of Gundasara village. The devotees of village Gundasara have donated an unparalleled and unforgettable labour work in creation of the Gurukul and Shree Hari has showered His grace on the devotees of Gundasara.

Ekadashi, on the Instruction of Maharaj

Jogi Swami is a great saint pursuing penance. Penance has weakened his body much. Slowly he became aged. The body became old but he did not lower the level of penance.

One day Purani Swami Bhaktiprakashdasji and the saints requested Jogi Swami, "Swami, now please do not pursue such a difficult penance. Your body is much weakened. Now your body would not bear the strain of observing 'Nirjala Ekadashi'. Please take some fruits."

Swami looked towards the saints for some time and then said, "Oh! you don't know. I do not observe the vow of Ekadashi at my own will. I observe it, as Maharaj has told me."

Purani Swami said, "Swami, we can't understand. Please tell it in a way as we can understand."

Thereafter, Jogi Swami narrated his divine experience, essence of which was as under:

At that time, Swami had come to Mahant Swami very recently to become a Sadhu (saint) and he was serving as a 'Parshad' at that time. Mahant Swami was appointed to Gondal temple for service. Therefore, Mahant Swami came to Gondal.

Jogi Swami was also with him as 'Parshad'. Swami was doing various services in the temple.

Mavji Bhagat of Upleta taught 'Kirtans' to Swami. Every day, while singing 'Kirtan', Swami used to get asleep near the platform of the temple at night. During the night, if any devotee would come, he would open the main door and would provide him the lodging facility.

Though Swami was a new comer as 'Parshad', he observed 'Nirjala Ekadashi' (means observing fast without taking any food or even water) but he found it very difficult. Sometimes he got fever. Sometimes blood came out of his mouth. Sometimes he had vomited blood.

Once it was 'Nimi Ekadashi' i.e. eleventh day of first half of Ashadh month (On that day devotees used to take vow (*Niyam*) to perform it for four months - *Chaturmas*). Swami was on fast even without taking water but he was finding it very difficult.

It was during the night, when cool air was gently blowing around and world was asleep under the starlit sky, when on the 'Otlā' (a platform near the entrance door of the temple) Jogi Swami was awake. Due to the fast of Ekadashi, he had fever. He was not asleep. However, every pore of his body was chanting the name of Shree Hari.

At that time, there appeared a flash. He opened his eyes and saw Shreeji Maharaj standing before him. Shreeji Maharaj was smiling at him. A dazzling cool light spread all around. Now let us see this divine experience of Darshan of Maharaj, in Jogi Swami's own words:

"O saints! It was very difficult for me to observe 'Nirjala Ekadashi', so while sleeping on the 'Otlā' of the temple, I prayed

to Maharaj, 'O Maharaj, now if you will associate with me, then only would I be able to observe 'Ekadashi' otherwise not'. Praying in this way, I got asleep and Maharaj came. Maharaj looked quite like the Murti of Maharaj in the old temple of Gondal. He wore all the white clothes. White Dhoti, white 'Khes' and white turban.

I woke up as I got the 'Darshan' of Maharaj but as I had fever, I again fell into stupor covering my head with a shawl. Maharaj pulled my shawl and spoke to me with a smile, "Bhagat! You find it very difficult to observe Ekadashi, is it not?"

I replied, "Yes Maharaj, it is very difficult".

Maharaj said, "Now it will not be difficult for you. Continue to observe Ekadashi forever". With these words, Maharaj disappeared. Hence, I observe Ekadashi as per the words of Maharaj, not on my own."

This divine experience is inscribed in the heart of Swami. Whenever we remember and describe that divine experience, if we do any error, Swami, would immediately correct us, as 'it was a day of 'Nimi Ekadashi' and Maharaj was wearing white Dhoti, white Khes and white turban'.

Swami Loves Penance

The entire life of Jogi Swami is full of penance. He loves penance very much; therefore, he performs penance and inspires others to do so.

When Jogi Swami happened to go abroad, he first went for the Darshan of Harikrishna Maharaj at Vadtal. While doing Darshan with utmost concentration, he said, "\O Harikrishna Maharaj! Please come along with us".

At that time, Vishwavihari Swami, who constantly remains in the service of Jogi Swami, thought that as Swami likes penance very much, therefore, during the foreign tour, I shall not take food or water and shall serve Swami by pursuing the penance. He apprised Jogi Swami about this volition before Harikrishna Maharaj in Vadtal.

Jogi Swami said, "Wait, let me ask Maharaj."

After some time, Jogi Swami said, "Maharaj has gladly consented; therefore you may pursue the penance." Thus, Swami gladly allowed Vihari Swami to pursue the penance.

Vishwavihari Swami took only fruits during the four months stay abroad with Jogi Swami and successfully fulfilled his volition. After returning to Bharat, Jogi Swami did the 'Darshan' of the God & Deities at the temples created by Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan and at his own hands offer food to Vihari Swami to conclude his vow. Thus, Vishwavihari Swami frequently observed the vows like '*Chandrayan*', '*Dharna-Parna*' '*Khat-Ras*' etc to get the grace of Jogi Swami.

Once in Junagadh, at the occasion of conclusion of a vow of Vishwavihari Swami, Jogi Swami expressed his joy by giving him the Murti of Shree Hari, worshipped by Mahant Swami and by him also.

Taking Care of Devout ...

In the tenth 'Vachanamrut' of Kariyani, Bhagawan Swaminarayan says, 'To please Bhagawan, Naradaji pursued severe penance by enduring cold, heat and hunger and thirst for many ages and pleased God... Therefore, the ascetic devotees shall know God as a doer of everything and shall earn the grace of God by pursuing the penance'.

Jogi Swami has fully realised these words of Shree Hari in his life.

Seeing Jogi Swami's liking for 'penance', the saints of Gurukul used to perform various kinds of penance to please Shree Hari and elder saints. Jogi Swami was glad to see the devout doing penance. With his kind sight, he would nourish the devout saints.

Once, Vishwavihari Swami observed '*Parak-kruchchh*', (a religious observance) which forbids the observer sleeping during the noon. If the observer would sleep at noon, the fast would break. It was the last day of vow. To help Vishwavihari to remain awake, Jogi Swami started preparing saplings of roses in a quite hot weather and said, "Vihari, you also prepare saplings".

During noon until the time of waking up of the God, Jogi Swami made Vishwavihari Swami prepare saplings of Roses. Next day, Jogi Swami offered 'Moong-soup' to Vihari Swami, made him to conclude his vow, and expressed his joy.

As the gardener takes care of the plants in the garden, Jogi Swami kindly takes care of the devout.

Note: Shree Vishwaviharidasji is in the service of Pujya Jogi Swami since long. His experiences with Jogi Swami have been narrated below in his own words.

Bath in the Places of Pilgrimage ...

Pujya Swami has great love and reverence for places of pilgrimage of 'Satsang'. Until he kept good health, he never missed 'Patotsav' at Gadhapur, Junagadh, Vadtal etc big temples. He used to do 'Darshan' of the Deities in the big temples

established by Bhagawan Swaminarayan and take bath in the Prasadi places (water reservoirs) with great faith and reverence.

Once we were coming from Surat to Ahmedabad. On the way, we went to Vadtal for the 'Darshan' of the Deities in the temple. After doing 'Darshan' of Laxminarayan Dev, Hari Krishna Maharaj of Vadtal temple, we went to River Gomati for bath where Jogi Swami sailed over the holy waters like a swan for a long time.

I asked, "Swami, what would you be doing while sleeping on the surface of the water of a river? Would you please teach us?"

Jogi Swami replied, "There is nothing to be done. I imagine Maharaj sitting on my chest and I continue to do 'Darshan' of Maharaj. Earlier I used to swim up to the middle of the pond where there is an 'Oto' (a platform) and sitting on that 'Oto' I used to remember the acts of Maharaj".

Earlier Swami used to go to Gadhapur along with the saints and devotees to take bath. In the early morning at five, after doing 'Pooja-Path', we used to go to Gadhapur in the car of Hansrajbhai or Arvindbhai. After reaching Gadhapur, Swami would do Darshan of Gopinathji Maharaj, would do 'Dandvat Pranam', and would move Mala. At that time, 'Shangar-Aarti' would be performed. After 'Aarti', Dhoon-Kirtan-prayer would be done. Thereafter, Swami would ask me to sing 'Kirtan'. We would sing Kirtan in chorus. Meanwhile Swami would move Mala for a long time standing before the Murti of Maharaj. Thereafter, Swami would go for the 'Darshan' of 'Sukh-shaiya'. The 'Poojari' would let him do 'Darshan' of 'Chakhadi' with great reverence. Thereafter, Swami would do 'Darshan' of Hanumanji and Ganpatiji and Shree Harikrishna Maharaj in the circumambulation space. Poojari would call him

to the inner part of the temple and would make him have 'Darshan' of articles of 'Prasadi'. From there, Swami would go to do the 'Darshan' of Neem-tree, the rooms of Darbar Gadh and Akshar-ordi, where he would sit and move Mala for some time, then he would do 'Dandvat Pranam' and 'Pradaxina' and would do 'Darshan' of 'Gangajaliya well' and Sadhu Ashram. Thereafter, he would go to Laxmi-wadi for the Darshan of Smruti-Mandir (memorial- temple) and would move Mala for some time. Then he would go to the room of Nishkulanand Swami and then he would go to the sitting place (*Bethak*), where Shreeji Maharaj had offered the garland of roses to Dada Khachar. Thereafter he would go to the place where Maharaj had played 'Raas' with the saints. Sometimes he would sit on the land. If disciples offer a mat, he would say, 'we shall not spread the mat here. This land bears the footprints of Maharaj and the great saints. This land is a Prasadi'.

On seeing this act of Swami, the accompanying saints and the devotees could more understand the spiritual importance of Maharaj; they would also follow Swami by sitting on the floor.

Pujya Jogi Swami would talk about the uncommon deeds of Maharaj. Thereafter, he would go to the river Ghelo and would touch the water with great reverence. Sometimes he would go to take bath at 'Sahasra-Dharo'.

Sometimes during the days of Hari-Jayanti, Ekadashi, Poornima Swami used to go to Junagadh or Gadhapur for the Darshan. Whenever he would visit Junagadh, Swami would certainly go to 'Narayan-Dharo' for bath.

After doing 'Darshan', when Swami would sit in the car, he would certainly ask the accompanying devotee about how much amount he has donated as 'Thal' to the God. Once,

Hansrajbhai was with him. Swami asked him how much did he donate? Hansrajbhai said, "Rupees three hundred."

Swami said, "God has given you in plenty. Go and donate some more."

Thus, he sends the devotee back and would say, "If we donate some part of our earning, peace would prevail in our home. You are to give from what the God has given to you. One should not hesitate to donate. If we donate, God will give more."

Sometimes Swami used to arrange celebration of 'Patotsav' through the disciples. Whenever he visited the villages, he used to ask the devotees to donate part of their earnings to the temple as per the command of the God. In addition, would say, "Donate in the proportion and God will give you much". Whenever some devotee would come to consult for water in his well, Swami used to say, "God will give water but you will have to donate the part of your income to the temple". Certainly those devotees would say, 'Swami, we would certainly donate from our income' and certainly those devotees would get water in their wells due to the grace of the God.

Divine Darshan of Shree Harikrishna Maharaj

Jogi Swami always remains engrossed in the remembrance of Shree Hari. All his actions would certainly be relating to the God. Therefore, he frequently gets the 'Darshan' of Shree Hari. During the sleep also, he gets dreams of the God only.

Once in the morning, Jogi Swami got up and said, "Vihari, I had a 'Darshan' of Harikrishna Maharaj."

I asked, "When?"

Swami said, "At night Harikrishna Maharaj had come here. While in the sleep, I was thinking that I could not go to Vadtal for the 'Darshan'. With this thought, I went to sleep. In the sleep, I had a 'Darshan' of Harikrishna Maharaj. How kind the Maharaj is! He came here to give me His 'Darshan'."

I said, "How good it would have been, if you made me also to have Darshan". Swami said, "I had remembered you. How can I forget you?"

I said, "Swami, please never forget me."

Swami said, "No, I will not forget you. You are serving me well."

While the conversation was going on, Shreevallabh Swami came to fold the 'Aasan' and Swami went to take bath.

Divine Darshan of the Saints

In February 1996, operation of Hydrocele was performed on Jogi Swami in the hospital of Dr. Siddhapara. I went to see him at the hospital with Shree Madhavpriyadasji. Jogi Swami said to Madhavpriya Swami, "Shastri at night I require to go to urinal. It would be better, if a young saint remains here, as this Vishnu serves me well but he is suffering from waist pain and perspires much."

I said to Shastri Madhavpriyadasji, "Swami! Can I stay here with Jogi Swami in the night?"

Swami consented and I stayed in the service of Jogi Swami.

It was mid-night. Suddenly Jogi Swami got up and exclaimed, "O Sadhu! See how many saints are there! Where would they be going? See, they are moving in the sky". After saying this, again Jogi Swami fell asleep moving the Mala.

Hari Jayanti was on the next day. I feared, perhaps Jogi Swami may leave for Akshardham. Because, I had heard that on the day of Hari Jayanti or Ekadashi, great saints would make their journey to Akshardham and they would have the 'Darshan' of Maharaj and the saints. Jogi Swami is also talking about 'Darshan' of big crowd of saints. While thinking in this way, night was over.

In the morning, I said to Pujya Devkrishnadasji Swami, "Swami! Jogi Swami was speaking in this way. Will he leave for Akshardham?"

Pujya Devkrishnadasji Swami said, "No, not at all. Since beginning, he has kept Maharaj and the saints only in his heart. Hence he is getting such divine 'Darshan'."

This is Really a Great Saint

It was the year 1999. I was in the service of Jogi Swami. While washing the clothes of Jogi Swami, I saw stains of blood. I immediately informed Balkrishnadasji Swami. He telephoned Dr. Indubhai. Immediately he came to Gurukul. Jogi Swami was moving Mala. Shastri Shree Madhavpriyadasji Swami, Pujya Shree Hariswarupdasji Swami and Shreevallabhdasji Swami were called. Dr. examined Swami and said, "It is fistula and it is ripe. We shall now dress it".

He took out a rod of steel and slowly moved it into the wound. Jogi Swami was uttering, 'Swaminarayan! Swaminarayan!' He asked me to read Vachanamrut.

I started to read 20th Vachanamrut of Gadhada first section. While listening to it, Swami slipped into deep meditation. The doctor made a hole with the steel rod, cleaned it with liquid and dressed it. The doctor was surprised at the enormous patience of Jogi Swami. The doctor said, "If anybody else is to be dressed in this way, two persons would require to press him. How easily Jogi Swami is bearing such unbearable pain!"

Dr. Indubhai said to Bal Swami, "If the sore is cleaned twice a day, Swami would have relief in pain. At this age, it would not be advisable to operate which would require making a cut of six inch. With this medicine, Swami would get relief. He should not be moved much". Saying this, he gave a rod and medicine to us.

Pujya Bal Swami called Shreevallabh Swami and me and said; "See Jogi Swami is a Godly saint. You both are serving him with reverence. Now he should not be moved much. His body is like a jar of glass, so fragile. Therefore, you will have to take more care of him now."

We assured him about better care of Jogi Swami by us. Bal Swami became pleased with this assurance.

In the evening, as dressing was to be done, we called Bal Swami. He came immediately and tried to make a hole in the sore to apply medicine into it, but he could not do it. He called Dr. Indubhai. He came and immediately dressed up the wound. As Swami was experiencing weakness, injections were given and hence he got some relief.

Once, Swami asked me, "O Vihari! What are you doing this every day?"

I said, "As you have a sore, we are dressing it."

Swami said, "Such things happen and would be cured also. You should say 'No' to the doctor. Now we do not need to apply medicine."

I reported this to Shree Hariswarupdasji. He talked to the doctor. Doctor said, "We shall give a five day course of tablets. He would not be cured fully but would get relief."

I started giving the prescribed medicines in the milk. Bleeding stopped. Meanwhile, we had to go to America. After returning from America, we thought to consult Dr. Indubhai again. Doctor came and diagnosed again. With great surprise he said, "Fistula is totally cured. Now there is no sign of the disease. This is really a great saint. Otherwise without operation this malady can't be cured."

Rules Are Rules to Follow

Once, Swami was suffering from severe cold. He was sitting under the tree of almonds near the printing press. I thought if Swami would take some 'Rab', he would have some relief. I prepared 'Rab' and took it to Swami. I said, "Swami, you are suffering from severe cold. Therefore, I have come with some 'Rab' after offering it to 'Thakorji'. If you wish, take some."

Swami said, "Vihari, there would be flour in it and now-a-days I take food once a day only. Therefore, I can't take 'Rab'."

Despite my insistence, Swami did not take it at all. Thus even in his old age, even on the pretext of medicine, he would not break the rules. He always remains alert in the matter.

(Here, the experiences of Vishvavihari Swami are over.)

Flow of Water

The saints of every branch of Gurukul always wish that Jogi Swami should visit their place. Jogi Swami also used to visit various branches of Gurukul, to please the saints living there.

Once, Jogi Swami had come to Junagadh Gurukul. While Swami was taking bath, the water stopped flowing from the tap. Swami came to know about shortage of water there. Swami said, "Oh! I show the source of water to many people and here there is no water? Vihari, call Gnan Swami."

Gnan Swami came. Swami said, "Come with me, I will show you the place where there is water."

Saying this, he came to the playground of the school. After moving here and there, he pointed at a place and said, "Bore here".

Gnan Swami said, "Swami! This is in the middle of the school's playground. Please show some other place on the side".

Swami walked a little and said, "Then dig a bore-well here. There is no water at any other place."

Boring machine started its work at the place showed by Jogi Swami. However, up to 400 feet, no water was found. All saints came to Jogi Swami and said, "Swami, the bore has gone down to 400 feet, but no water is struck."

Jogi Swami said, "If it is so, let me see". Swami went to the place where boring was being done. He took a piece of stone, came out of bore and said, "There is inexhaustible water here. Dig deeper."

As per the advice of Jogi Swami, it was decided to dig for further 100 feet. The machine started. When it reached 500

feet deep, water sprang up and gushed out of the bore as if flow of blessings comes out, as if spring of nectar spread in the playground of the school.

Even today, water does not exhaust in this bore. In the surrounding area, water even is not available at 800 feet depth and here at the depth of 500 feet water is inexhaustible. It is the grace of a great saint Jogi Swami.

This Would Be the Place of Hectic Activities

Karshanbhai Bhanderi of village Taravada (Dist. Amreli), the birthplace of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, came for the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami and said, "Swami, this year we dug two wells but no water struck". On hearing this, Swami said, "With the remembrance of Maharaj, dig a well in the land opposite the gate".

As per the advice of Jogi Swami, a well was dug. Much water spouted. As this land was near the village, it was decided to make it non-agricultural and to divide it into plots. At that time, Karshanbhai came to Swami and said, "Swami! Please bless us, so that we may succeed in our plan".

Swami, while moving Mala, closed his eyes for a while and then said, "Oh! In the land of that farm, there would be hectic activities."

The land of that farm was divided into plots but even after elapsing of three years, no plot could be sold.

In the meanwhile, search for the land for creating Gurukul at Taravada was on. After many obstacles, at last, the land of Karshanbhai, which was made non-agricultural, was

selected for the Gurukul. The foundation stone was laid at the auspicious hands of great saint Jogi Swami and Gurukul was established there.

As Jogi Swami has said, this land is now resounding with pious activities like Dhoon, Bhajan and Satsang.

Pious Incidents of Foreign Tour

None could believe that Jogi Swami would visit America. Since long, the devotees of America were insisting that Jogi Swami should visit America but Jogi Swami did not consent.

Once Dhirubhai Babariya requested Jogi Swami, "Swami, you may please come to America". Swami immediately denied and said, "Tell me not to go to America, but tell me to go to Akshardham".

Once again, Dhirubhai insisted, hence, Swami said, "I will tell you tomorrow after asking for permission of Maharaj." Next day Swami said, "Maharaj, says no, hence I will not come." Thus, time elapsed and the insistence of the devotees of America increased.

Whenever Dhirubhai came to this country, he insisted Jogi Swami should come at America but Swami was not giving his consent. Many devotees of America were praying to Shree Hari so that a great saint like Jogi Swami may visit America to sanctify the land and to give Darshan to the devotees there. Thus, three to four years elapsed.

Now Jogi Swami has become much aged, nearly ninety-six years. Due to regularity in food and simple lifestyle, his health is good. However, it was not felt wise that to take risk going abroad at this old age.

At last, in view of true love and reverence of devotees of America, Maharaj conveyed a sign of his consent to Jogi Swami for his visit to America. Swami was suffering from Hernia and frequently he experienced pain but he never complained about it. He dislikes going to hospital. He would bear the pain but would not wish to go to hospital. If pain increases, much, he would only say, "Oh this tumour is harassing much." When Dhirubhai Babariya came to know this' he got a point to insist that Swami should come to America.

Once he said to Swami, "Swami, Hernia is harassing you much, isn't it?" Swami said, "Yes, it is." Dhirubhai said, "Swami, there are very good doctors in America. If you come to America, we can get this pain removed."

Swami had no idea as to where does America exist and how far away it is. However, Swami agreed in the matter of removing the tumour. Swami said, "Then let us go to America. Start preparations." When Swami consented, the devotees of America felt themselves fortunate. Everyone thought that Shreeji Maharaj had created a pretext to fulfill the wish of the devotees in America. When Swami has consented, there should be no delay. They decided not to lose this chance to welcome Swami into America.

Arrangements were made in a very short time. Dhirubhai Babariya sent all necessary documents for Visa. Vishrambhai Vaghji sent sponsor documents for U.K. Till then nobody in this country had any idea about foreign tour of Jogi Swami. Who can imagine that Swami would go abroad at such an old age?

Everyone knows that to get Visa for America is a very difficult job. Influence cannot work in American Visa office.

There would be long queue of people wishing Visa for U.K. and U.S.A. It requires standing in queue for long hours.

It was meaningless to let Swami pass through such a difficult process. There would be one common queue for males and females and due to old age, Swami could not pass through this process. It was a difficult problem. If it would require personal visit of Swami to Mumbai, the tour could be cancelled. And, if he could not report personally, can he get Visa? That was also a vital question. Therefore, it was meaningless to inform the devotees here, until the problem of Visa was resolved. The saints, who were to accompany Jogi Swami to America, went to Mumbai but Swami did not.

Rajnibhai Gajera, who had made all the preparations for Visa, is a sincere worker of Gurukul. He was of the opinion that relatively it is easier to get Visa for UK Hence, we shall first get Visa for UK If it is done successfully then American Embassy would not create any problem. As the opinion of Rajnibhai seemed to be fair, at first, Visa for UK was applied. The British Embassy was ready to give Visa only after personal appearance of Swami before the Visa officer.

All the organizers were worried to receive such a reply from UK Embassy, because the task was more difficult in American Embassy. It was difficult to imagine about the possible reply of American Embassy. At last, the situation arose to cancel the visit of Jogi Swami. But due to the inspiration of Shree Hari, Jogi Swami was mentally prepared in every respect to go to America to get removed the tumour of Hernia and also to remove the tumour of birth and death of so many souls.

Received a Phone Call

News of negative response of British Embassy came from Mumbai. I thought that when British Embassy has denied, it is nearly impossible to get Visa for America. Therefore, in case the visit is cancelled, we decided to prepare Swami for a negative reply.

Next day morning, when Swami was engrossed in Pooja, Mukesh Bhagat was reading Vachanamrut before him. One or two saints were sitting beside him. I informed him, "Swami! As the Government is not giving the permission, perhaps we shall have to cancel our proposed foreign tour."

Jogi Swami continued to look at me for some time and said, "But we have received a phone-call. We have received the permission." I looked at him with surprise, 'Phone-call is received! What does it mean?' Because Swami does, not attend any telephone call. If he had to, he would only say, 'Jay Swaminarayan' and no more.

As per my knowledge, a phone call was received from Mumbai as, 'If Swami personally comes to British Embassy, and then only British Embassy would give Visa' but there was nothing like 'permission is received'. Therefore, I was astonished. What was Swami saying? Phone call received means? Whose phone call, and when received?

At that time, Swami again said, "Be prepared to go, a phone call is received. Permission is received."

Recognising my confusion, Swami again said, "All our papers are approved and we have got permission. A phone call like this is received, therefore start preparations."

I was unable to understand Swami's words. In Mumbai the saints and Rajnibhai Gajera were a little disappointed (in view of the British Embassy's insistence of Swami's personal attendance there at Mumbai). Confusion was prevailing over going to the American Embassy to seek Visa. Rajnibhai had already reserved tickets for travel by phone. We were undecided about whether to approach American Embassy for Visa or not.

As such, all were of the opinion that Swami should not take the risk of going abroad at such an old age.

I talked to Rajnibhai about various options open before us. However, there was no answer to the question, what shall we do if US Embassy insists on personal appearance of Jogi Swami? I advised Rajnibhai, 'Along with the saints, you may go to American Embassy tomorrow. Let us see what happens. At the most, they would deny the Visa, and then we will cancel the visit'.

After having met Jogi Swami, Bal Swami met me near the kitchen. I asked, "Bal Swami! Jogi Swami says that a phone call is received, but I can't understand."

Bal Swami said, "Swami is a great saint. Maharaj might have given him some indication". In the meanwhile, Hariswarupdasji Swami came there. I told him, "There is a great difficulty of Visa and Jogi Swami says that a phone call is received".

Swami Hariswarupdasji said, "Let it be as Maharaj wishes. Let us see what happens."

The whole day passed in worry and confusion. Next day Rajnibhai Gajera went to the American Embassy along with the saints. We were worried as it was difficult to deal with

American Embassy. We were anxiously waiting for the news from Mumbai.

At 10:30 in the morning, along with Karshan Raghavani and Bal Swami, I was sitting in the office at Chharodi. We were discussing the construction of swimming pool of the school. We were eager to hear the news from Mumbai. A meeting was arranged at 11:00 o'clock about the school and we were preparing for the meeting. In the meantime, Mukeshbhai Unadkat contacted us on mobile phone. We were sailing on the high waves of expectations with natural concern.

Mukeshbhai said, "Swami! There is extremely good news. Jogi Swami and other saints have got American Visa. We are now going to our place of lodging. We have telephoned you to give this news". Now there was no limit to our joy. I said, "Mukeshbhai, your phone call is received today but Jogi Swami has received a Phone call yesterday from somebody that the Visa is received. Who that 'somebody' is, only Swami knows."

Rajnikant was experiencing endless joy because behind all these, his great efforts were there. He had rendered incomparable services to the Gurukul. Gurukul is a big institution, a very big family. The occasions of going abroad happen frequently. To get Passport, Visa, booking of tickets etc. all the services are rendered by Rajnikant. He always works day and night for the Gurukul.

Rajnikant said, "Swami! American Embassy has given Visa without seeing any document. Now getting Visa from British Embassy remain. Again, I am going to do an experiment. Let us see what happens?"

We now believed that Swami had certainly received a phone call from 'somebody' and we were now convinced that what was happening was as per the will of Maharaj. When Shree Hari Himself was taking care, we were not to worry. We advised Rajnikant, "You may go to British Embassy with remembrance of Maharaj."

Next day the news came from Rajnikant, which increased our surprise. British Embassy, which was insisting personal presence of Jogi Swami two days ago, had given Visa without seeing any document. Jogi Swami is related to some 'supreme' office, hence he can receive phone call from the Supreme-power, and then how small offices on the earth can deny him Visas?

Thus, due to divine intervention of Shree Hari, the difficult task of getting Visa was completed. After receiving Visa, hectic preparations for the foreign tour were started.

The year 2000 AD means millennium year for the whole world. The entire world was preparing to say 'Good-Bye' to the last days of the 2000 AD with great joy and festivity. The world was thrilled with the advance arrangements of celebrations.

In this historical year, the historical foreign tour of Jogi Swami started. The Visa was received on 02 June 2000 and from 08 June 2000, Thursday early morning tour of America was starting from Ahmedabad. As we had very short period, we immediately started speedy preparations. The confusion as to whether Swami should be taken to America at such an old age had disappeared as everyone was now convinced that this tour is arranged with the consent of Shree Hari Himself.

Preparations for the Journey

Purani Swami Bhaktiprakashdasji along with a group of saints was moving in America since long and they were eagerly waiting for the arrival of Jogi Swami. Sadhu Dharmapriyadasji, Sadhu Shantipriyadasji and Parshad Manubhagat were with him when they received the news that the work of getting Visa was successful. They were very glad. They were anxiously waiting for the arrival of Jogi Swami.

Apart from me, Shree Hariswarupdasji, Vishwaviharidasji, Vishwaswarupdasji, Shreevallabhdasji, Shree Gopalcharandasji, Vashram Bhagat etc. saints and Parshads had joined Jogi Swami in this tour.

Jogi Swami has great love and grace for Shreevallabhdasji. Since many years, Shreevallabhdasji is serving Jogi Swami with reverence. Swami also invariably takes him wherever he goes and for Vishwaviharidasji, Jogi Swami is everything. He has great oneness with Jogi Swami. Vishwavihari is serving Jogi Swami with great care, reverence and love.

The news of Jogi Swami's proposed foreign tour flooded Ahmedabad and the remote parts of Gujarat. Many could not believe that it could ever happen. For the age of Swami and the tenets of conduct he observes, surprised many at his astonishing decision to travel abroad.

As Nishkulanand Swami has written: 'Unimagined things happened to me'.

The land of America and particularly of Latin America was calling the saint to have his footprints on it. The hearts of

the devotees of that land were yearning for the divine 'Darshan' of this truly great saint.

The tour of Swami was not organised for sightseeing, not for collecting donations and not for any other selfish motive. It was organised to give hope to the forlorn, strength to the distressed and love to the yearning humanity and to fulfil the volitions of hearts of the devotees. For this purpose only, Shree Hari had inspired Jogi Swami. Otherwise looking to the life of this saint, it seems impossible to us. If we see in the words of Nand Saints:

None has ever seen or heard

Such a holy stream (of Satsang) as has been created by Shree Hari

We are fulfilled O! My God!

You have uplifted and sanctified innumerable people.

The Farewell Meeting

It was Sunday, 04 June 2000. A grand farewell assembly was arranged at Chharodi Gurukul. Purani Balkrishnadasji Swami would not arrange any celebration in a small way. Moreover, it was a historical and wonderful event for the entire Gurukul family. A great number of people poured into Chharodi Gurukul from the cities and villages. Within a short time, a great assembly was convened.

When Jogi Swami arrived at the meeting, he was greeted with clapping by the assembly. The loud words 'Jay Swaminarayan' filled the sky. It was a sea of humanity roaring with resounding waves of 'Jay Swaminarayan'. Swami sat in the assembly for long.

Everyone desired that Swami should speak a few words on that memorable occasion. Vihari Swami requested Swami to speak. Jogi Swami consented and Vishwavihari Swami placed a mike before him. Swami said, "You are doing devotion, continue to do so. It is a great beneficial thing". The great assembly expressed its joy with clapping and resounding 'Jay Swaminarayan'.

Whenever Jogi Swami speaks, the words come from his heart. Hence, its impact on the listeners is great. The inner force of the words is so great that it resounds equally from the hearts of the listeners. His simple words could pierce the darkness of ignorance in the hearts of the listeners.

"Be with Us, Maharaj"

On 05 June 2000, Pujya Jogi Swami came to Vadtal for the 'Darshan' of Harikrishna Maharaj. His body looked energetic. Jogi Swami sat before Shree Harikrishna Maharaj for long and moved Mala. Then he stood up with folded hands and prayed, "Maharaj, be with us." Maharaj also would have said with a smiling face, "Swami! I am always with you".

Then Swami came to Kalupur temple to have the Darshan of Nar-Narayan Dev. With great reverence, he did Darshan and here also he prayed, "Maharaj, be with us".

Nar-Narayandev also looked like saying, "Jogi Swami! We do not remain away from a saint like you, even for a moment."

We were to start our journey in the early morning of 09-06-2000. Until late night there was a great rush of devotees, therefore, Jogi Swami could get very little time to sleep. At 12:30 am, we went to the airport. There was a big crowd of devotees

there. Many devotees had taken vows of moving Mala and Bhajan-Bhakti expecting the good health of Swami.

Shree Shaileshbhai Vyas, a dedicated devotee and volunteer of Gurukul family, had reached there earlier. He had made very nice arrangements there with the co-operation of airport officers, so that Jogi Swami and accompanying saints may not have to face any difficulty. For us, it was a very first instance to have close contacts of Shailesh Vyas and for him also it was a very first occasion to serve in such a way.

Airport officers welcomed Swami cordially. They lead him to VIP lounge. Seeing complete peace and silence in the lounge, he became very glad. He delighted others with his conduct and took great delight in the silence of the lounge. The saint looked fresh and inspiring, as if Sahajanand Swami Himself was providing him the stock of joy from his heart.

The flight was late by one hour. We were worried that Swami would be tired however, he did not look tired at all.

At last, the plane took off from Ahmedabad for Mumbai. We had to change the plane at Mumbai. Wheel chair was ready for Jogi Swami.

The plane was a spacious Jumbo with two floors, which could accommodate a small village inside. Jogi Swami's seat was on the upper floor. The rows of seats were narrow. The saints took him on the upper floor slowly with care. Jogi Swami took his seat and Vishwavihari Swami and Shreevallabh Swami fastened the seat belt.

At last, this great saint left for foreign country to sanctify its land. Since previous day, he was taking constant strain, yet he took little sleep and then he covered his head with his shawl and moved Mala until the plane landed at London. Meanwhile,

he did not remove shawl from his head and never looked out of the window. He had immersed himself in Maharaj within himself, who is the self of all. He continued to remember Maharaj throughout.

Jogi Swami never showed any sign of fatigue. He was cool and calm. He was immersed with Maharaj in his heart throughout the long journey. Even young men complain of tiredness in such a long journey, but Jogi Swami was happy meditating and doing 'Bhajan'. Before leaving India, he had prayed Maharaj to be with him and Maharaj was certainly with him.

Arrival at London

On 9th June 2000 at 11:30 am, the plane landed at Heathrow Airport. The Haribhaktas in good number had come to the airport to welcome the great saint. Everyone was eager to have the 'Darshan' of Pujya Jogi Swami. Immigration formalities were completed quickly. For Swami and the saints, the arrangements were made in fast track. Hence, the formalities were completed within a short period. As Swami was with us, we also could come out quickly from immigration. If we follow a great saint, we can have right way ahead easily. Otherwise, the immigration formalities were difficult for us to pass through quickly.

It is said that there is a kind of fish, which is known as net-cutting fish. It has two sharp edges on both sides of its body. It cannot be caught in net, and if it is caught, it cuts the net and comes out and with it; other small fish of other kinds following

it also get freedom from the net. The great saints on the earth are also like net-cutting fish. They cannot be caught in the net of 'Maya'. If they are graceful enough to take birth on this earth, they would cut the unbreakable net of Maya. Not only that, they free the people associated with them. Therefore, the scriptures advise to follow the path of great saints. '*Maha Jano yen gatah sah pantha*'. Which is the best path? The path taken by the great people and saints.

Incidentally, many other saints of Swaminarayan Sampraday were to arrive in UK at that time. Hence, the Heathrow Airport was crowded with the followers of Swaminarayan Sampraday. The words of Gunatitanand Swami: 'At every leaf of every tree there would be Swaminarayan, Swaminarayan, were proving right'.

Big crowd of devotees was present to welcome Jogi Swami. The President of Shree Kutch Satsang Swaminarayan Mandir, Kenton, Shree Vishrambhai Vaghji, D.S. Patel, Virjibhai Keravala, K.M. Varsani, Ramjibhai Khimani, Arjunbhai Vekariya, Babubhai Parmar and other leading Haribhaktas and Naran Raghvani, Manjibhai Mepani, Bhimji Savani, Ravji Hirani, Hareesh Patel (Narwala) and other past students were much anxious to see Jogi Swami.

As Jogi Swami came out from immigration and luggage section, loud sound of 'Jay Swaminarayan' resounded in the air and in the sky of London. Hearty felicitation was given to the saints with many coloured garlands and flowers. Swami took seat in Mercedes car of Naran Kanji Raghvani (a past student of Gurukul) and went to the Kenton temple.

Have We Arrived in Kutch?

After arriving at the Kenton temple, Swami took bath. He had performed 'Pooja' before the journey started. After taking bath, he took rest for a while. He attended evening 'Aarti' in the temple. He was delighted to see this big and beautiful temple. He said, "Oh! The temple is very big. How beautiful Ghanshyam Maharaj is!" Then innocently he asked, "Vihari! Where have we come?"

Vishwaviharidasji said, "Swami, we have come to London. There are many disciples from Kutch here."

Swami said, "Good, I have visited Kutch many times. I have got very good relations with the saints of Kutch." Saying this, he remembered Sadguru Mahant Swami Hariswarupdasji and Sadguru Swami Morlimanohardasji very much. He also remembered some incidents of Kutch.

Thereafter Swami said, "O Vihari! So we have come to Kutch!"

The childlike innocence delighted many. For Swami Kutch and London both are equal. How can one explain to Swami that this Kutch is very far from India! However, Vishwavihari has been serving Jogi Swami since long; hence, he has expertise to talk to Swami in his style of language.

Vishwavihari said, "Swami, this Kutch is very far from our country, five to six thousand miles away from Ahmedabad. We have come here."

Swami said, "Oh! Five six thousand miles? Then this Kutch is very far. We have come this far yet we could not know!"

In the evening assembly, Swami gave 'Darshan' and gave 'Prasadi' of sugar crystals to all.

On Saturday 10 June 2000, Swami came to the morning assembly. Swami asked me, "Shastri, tell the story of a Muslim of Hyderabad who became the member of the 'Satsang' fellowship and also tell how Maharaj had given sons to Lalji Bhagat of Samatra (Kutch)."

I said, "Swami you may please talk about it." Swami said, "My throat is not well. You may please narrate."

With the order of Swami, I narrated those incidents in the assembly. The devotees were very glad.

Praiseworthy Satsang Activities

The Haribhakta devotees from Kutch settled in UK maintain the virtues of 'Satsang' nicely. Wherever they have gone, they have kept the God with them. At many places, they have created temples. They assemble in the temple regularly and do Dhoon-Bhajan. The old persons are passing their time in Dhoon-Bhajan, 'Satsang' in the temple. The youngsters take part in the various service activities of the temple.

In Kenton temple, a School from nursery to primary is being run. Thus with the various service activities for male and female devotees, the 'Satsang' is strengthened. They celebrate various festivals as in India, with zeal and enthusiasm. While doing 'Darshan' of such festivals, we feel, as if we are in India.

On the occasions like 'Annakut', thousands of people come for the 'Darshan' and 'Prasad' is given to them freely.

Kenton temple could not accommodate the great number of people who come for the 'Darshan' every Sunday evening. The service of volunteers in the separate meetings for male and female devotees is praiseworthy. The saints may be there or not,

the devotees sing Kirtans and read scriptures themselves. In fact, the Satsang Society, without depending upon the saints, shall mould itself.

Assembly on Sunday

Kenton temple was full of disciples on 11 June 2000, Sunday. Everyone was eager to have the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami. Haribhaktas were overwhelmed with great joy to have the 'Darshan' of Swami.

There was a great rush of devotees on that evening. When Jogi Swami came to the assembly to give 'Darshan' to the Haribhaktas, the jubilant devotees immersed in the wave of joy and reverence. A very good arrangement of video camera was made in Kenton temple so that the women disciples sitting in the separate assembly were able to see and hear the Swami through the screens. With this arrangement, the male and female devotees and the saints can observe religious tenets commanded by the Bhagawan Shree Swaminarayan and the women can get the benefits of Satsang at large. Instead of spending temple's money haphazardly, it should be utilised in such arrangements in the temples, to strengthen the Satsang.

The rules of conducts for the women in Swaminarayan Sampraday require to be seen in its true letter and spirit. A widespread misunderstanding prevails in this matter. There is no contempt for women in Swaminarayan Sampraday. The Satsang fellowship has not looked down the women. Instead, the holy order has given great attention to their respective and respectable areas of activities. The misunderstanding is created due to the excessive enthusiasm demonstrated by some saints and volunteers. We need clarity of perception in observance of

the rules of the Sampraday. We spend lacs of rupees in decoration and basic needs are forgotten. We congratulate the management team of Kenton temple for creation of such a good arrangement to satisfy the basic need. Due to this arrangement, in both the separate meetings of Men and Women, the devotees were able to have the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami accurately. The women were listening to the talks of Swami as if they were sitting before Swami.

May Maharaj Protect Your Progeny

In that Sunday meeting, at the order of Jogi Swami I spoke for some time. All the devotees were eager to hear a few words from Jogi Swami. Swami also gave 'Prasadi' of 'Sakar' (sugar crystals) and few effective and inspiring words. Even his silence is more eloquent and effective than many orations. To fulfill the wish of the Haribhaktas, Jogi Swami spoke from his heart filled with joy, "O devotees! Shastri has delighted you much with his lectures and reading of scriptures. You should also be pleased with Shastri". I was overwhelmed with the shower of his grace on me. But, then an important thing came. What Swami spoke thereafter was most significant. Swami said, "May Bhagawan Swaminarayan protects your progeny." It was really surprising because Jogi Swami did not at all know the social and cultural atmosphere prevailing there and its adverse impact on the young generation of our people living there. Yet the appropriate words came out from his heart.

How to protect our young generation from the vices of sensual atmosphere prevailing in foreign countries is a great question. In such a situation, the words came out from the Jogi Swami's heart as if Maharaj spoke from his heart, "May Shree

Hari protect your young generation". The audience clapped to express their joy for the relevant blessings.

A Thorn is Removed by Another Thorn

On the occasion of our tour of England, one supplementary subject is 'Relations between the Indians and the Britishers'.

India's relations with England are age old. There are many good and bad aspects therein. The steps taken by the Britishers for peaceful life of the general public were unique, inspiring peace and faith in the hearts of the public. The people felt safe and fearless under their rule. It cannot be denied.

Those people, selfish and cunning like a jackal, had come to India, the wealthy nation with their own interest. However, certain qualities of those people were really praiseworthy.

When Bhagawan Swaminarayan was moving in India, the people of this country, particularly the people in Gujarat, were really suffering from the tyranny of the feudal lords (local rulers). The general public was suffering from all quarters. On one side, outlaws were looting the people and on the other side local head strong persons and groups of mendicants were harassing and oppressing them in the name of the religion. The common person was persecuted. In this situation, the Britishers defeated and subdued the headstrong individuals and persons harassing the public and established the rule of law. They took care of the people; therefore, Shree Hari had respect for the Britishers. Several learned intellectual Indians of that time have praised this virtue of the Britishers and even today, old people remember them when the public is oppressed by the contemporary ruffians like, political leaders.

One *Thakor* (Ruler) of village Limli, sarcastically asked Bhagawan Swaminarayan, "Swaminarayan! People are considering you Bhagawan. Then why do you not eradicate the British rule from this country?" Shree Hari immediately gave befitting and irrefutable reply, "Darbar! Have you not seen that a thorn is removed by another thorn? The evil is removed by another evil. Our holy land of India is hurt by the thorns like headstrong people like you. We have brought a big thorn from Europe to remove the troubling thorns like you. When thorns like you are removed, there would be no need of that big thorn. The time will come when it will also be removed. Don't worry". The Thakor was stunned on listening to the fearless reply of Shree Hari and went away.

Bhagawan Swaminarayan liked the British administration and justice. Sometimes Shree Hari used to tell that King Angad was the Leader of Monkeys of Kishkindha. He had helped Bhagawan Ram in search of Sita to a great extent. Therefore, Bhagawan Shree Ram was pleased with him and said, 'a day will come when your progeny would rule the entire world and the Sun would not set in their kingdom'.

A close look at the features and intelligent behaviour of the Britishers would lead us to believe that they are akin to the species of intelligent descendants of Angad and his subjects. This could be an area of research for Anthropologists.

The Britishers were fascinated with Bhagawan Swaminarayan for His great influence on the people of Gujarat. The Britishers had great respect and reverence for Bhagawan Swaminarayan. Some of them had thought to convert Him into Christian faith, so that many thousand may follow him. Bishop Haber had tried the same but he had failed. Bhagawan

Swaminarayan's influence was so enormous that he tried to evade him, lest he himself would become His disciple!

Sir John Malcolm, who was the Governor of the Province of Bombay, had great love and respect for Shree Hari. During his visit to Rajkot, he came to see Bhagawan Swaminarayan and asked Him, "Swami! How do you control the unruly people while we cannot do that even with the power of the State?"

Shree Hari smiled and gave him a little book of Shikshapatri and said, "Our whole magic is contained in this book". Sir Malcolm received the book with love and respect. He kept it on his head as an act of veneration and preserved it as a mark of a memorable meeting with a rare spiritual leader.

This unique gift of Shree Hari to the Britishers is carefully preserved in the Bodleian library of Oxford University and it is strengthening the cultural relations between India and Europe. A big project has been taken up on 'Shikshapatri' by Oxford University. The University has brought 'Shikshapatri' into every home through the internet in the entire world.

'Darshan' of the 'Magic Stick'

Jogi Swami wanted to do the 'Darshan' of 'Shikshapatri' deposited devotedly in the Oxford University by Sir John Malcolm. Therefore, a program to visit Oxford University with a group of a few saints and devotees was arranged. Jogi Swami visited the University and sanctified its land. The authority of library had made the arrangements. As this significant book has been attracting a number of people, for the reasons of security and other reasons, the number of visitors is being restricted. Jogi Swami took Shikshapatri reverently in his hand, touched it to his eyes and looked at it for long with great respect.

We keep a copy of this magic book closed in the box of Pooja but Jogi Swami has realised it in his life. He has woven it with his life. He breathes in and out the spirit of 'Shikshapatri', hence his life has become like a great magician of divinity. If one follows the commands of Shree Hari, a divine light takes place in his life. Jogi Swami is a living example of the same.

Emotional Farewell from London

The days passed happily in London. Everyone experienced great happiness and reverence with the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami, in such a far foreign country. Jogi Swami was also cheerful throughout. Swami had regular sleep. His sleep is a part of his meditation because he is always associated with Shree Hari. Jogi Swami is consistent in food habits. He does not take salt, chilli, oil and sugar. Only Chapatti, date and milk. Sometimes he takes mango juice or watermelon. He takes meal only once in a day in the evening. Due to such restraints, he is quite healthy even at the age of 95.

On 12-06-2000 Monday, we were to take farewell from London. Jogi Swami arrived in the morning meeting. While doing 'Darshan' of Ghanshyam Maharaj in the temple, he again prayed, "Maharaj please be with us". As if Maharaj also smiling a little at him, was saying, "Swami, I am always with you and do not depart even for a moment."

Jogi Swami spoke for a while in the farewell meeting. Nishkulanand Swami says, "The words come out from his heart without any effort." When Swami speaks, he speaks with the celestial sweetness, which mere words fail to convey. A few words of Jogi Swami swayed the audience. When he speaks,

the entire assembly becomes totally attracted towards him and his words can touch the inner hearts of the listeners.

After saying a few words of blessings in the Kenton temple, Puja Jogi Swami left for the airport. Large number of male and female devotees were present in the temple for the 'Darshan'. Jogi Swami sat in the car of Ramjibhai Khimani. Ramjibhai had got a new life (was survived from severe brain stroke) with the grace of Swami, hence he had great reverence and joy.

President of Kenton temple Shree Vishrambhai and other leading Haribhaktas along with former students of Gurukul were with the saints up to the airport. Formalities of check-in etc. were completed and then it was time to take seat in the plane.

The scene at the London airport was unique. Tears were rolling down from the eyes of the devotees and the former students of Gurukul. The eyes of Vishrambhai were also moist with tears of love and gratitude. He has unique oneness with Jogi Swami. He is quite an intelligent and capable person and manages the Kenton temple keeping all the people together under the shelter of 'Satsang'.

Years ago we happened to go to Dar-es-salam with Puja Purani Swami Premprakashdasji. At that time, Vishrambhai lived in the temple of Dar-es-salam. At that time, he was young. He came in the contact of Puja Purani Swami who was like a loving mother and resultantly 'Satsang' was strengthened in his heart. His brother Karshanbhai is also a good devotee. Whenever he remembers Purani Swami as his 'Guru', he becomes emotional.

While bidding farewell to Jogi Swami from London, tears rolled down from the eyes of Vishrambhai. The students and

other devotees were also shedding tears. Several speeches of farewell meeting failed to convey what the tears of departure could speak. Love for God is the heart and soul of Swaminarayan Sampraday. It is not dry as the way of 'Vedanta'. Swaminarayan Sampraday is rich with unfathomable knowledge of 'Upanishads'. It contains the essence of 'Smritis' as good conduct to be observed in life. It is also having detachment in its right spirit but love in the Murti of Shree Hari is the best means. Other three i.e. Dharma, Gnan and Vairagya (detachment) are supplementary to the devotion. However, the main thing is love towards the form of Shree Hari.

On seeing the love of the devotees at the London airport, the hearts of the saints also were filled with emotion. Thus, Jogi Swami along with the saints took leave of London.

From UK to USA

12 June 2000, Monday. We were to go a long way from London to New York by plane. The plane took off. The plane was flying like an eagle over the clouds. Vishwavihari Swami and Shreevallabhdasji fastened the seat belt of Jogi Swami. Swami covered his face with a shawl and started moving Mala. Swami was sitting straight in his seat without taking the support of the back of the seat. In this long journey, Swami stood up from his seat once or twice for going to the toilet. He continued to move Mala throughout the journey. Swami's practice to do devotion by sitting at a place for long is great.

As sometimes 'Paramhansas' like 'Sanakadik', arrive in heaven to sanctify it, Jogi Swami arrived in USA and set his feet on the land of USA.

Wherever the great saint set his feet, places of pilgrimage are created there. Swami had come here to the heaven-like land to create the places of pilgrimage.

After completion of immigration formalities, Swami came out along with the saints. Dhirubhai Babariya had been with Swami from the day the saints left India. Ghanshyambhai Vaghasiya cut short all his programmes and joined Swami from London. Large number of devotees and students were eagerly waiting for the arrival of Swami at the airport, as long cherished desire of all those devotees had now yielded the result.

Shree Chaturbhai, Shree Dipubhai Gajera, Shree Ashwin Gajera, Shree Ramesh Savaliya, Shree Dineshbhai, Shree Virjibhai Paghdal from New Jersey and Shree Pratapbhai Jobanputra, Shree Mohanbhai Patel, Shree Niranjanbhai of Adhyatma Vikas Kendra and other devotees from New York were very eager to welcome Jogi Swami at the airport.

As soon as Jogi Swami came out of the airport, he was welcomed with cheerful and loud 'Jay Swaminarayan' resounding in the sky. Jogi Swami came to Chaturbhai Vaghasiya's house from the airport. Here the loving disciples had made unique arrangement to ceremonially welcome Jogi Swami. At every step, sacred rice and roses were spread to adorn the house where Jogi Swami was to tread. Everybody's heart was full of joy.

Shreeji Maharaj is always with me

For Jogi Swami, it was a very long journey. Protracted formalities were also completed at both the airports and it took two hours to travel from J.F. Kennedy airport to the home of Chaturbhai Vaghasiya. We all were worried that Swami would

have been tired, but the fact was different. Despite a long tiresome journey, Jogi Swami was quite fresh and cheerful. Our source of happiness is limited but Swami has access to an inexhaustible source i.e. Sahajanand Swami Himself.

If Jogi Swami is cheerful, we are also cheerful. Our joy comes out of our body hence it is short-lived, but Swami's joy is divine, hence it is evergreen. Swami always remains in a divine spirit.

At Chaturbhai's house, while other saints were engaged in taking bath, Vihari Swami and I were seated near Jogi Swami. Swami said, "Shastri, I am ceaselessly engaged in the Bhajan of Swaminarayan. Shreeji Maharaj is always with me". Swami's every word was full of divine spirit of Shreeji Maharaj. We all were thinking that Swami may be tired but we could see incomparable joy of Swami. Many a times, Swami talks on various subjects but on that day what Swami had talked about was unprecedented. His talks were full of happiness and divine spirit. Our hearts also filled with joy.

D. K. Shah and Dhirubhai Kotadia had come from India to accompany and to have the benefit of 'Satsang' meetings of Jogi Swami. Shree Gordhanbhai Babariya and other devotees had come from Dallas in the morning. Swami was performing Pooja until late in the morning. Sometime in the afternoon, while sitting in the wheel chair, he would move out. Thereafter, while Swami was sitting in the chair, Vachanamrut and 'Bhakta Chintamani' were being read. In the evening Aarti, Niyam-chesta were being recited. Many disciples were coming from far to have the benefit of 'Darshan' and 'Satsang' of Jogi Swami.

Gargle with Salt ..

On 15 June 2000, Ravibhai Trivedi came from Ottawa for the 'Darshan'. A process to affiliate our Shree Swaminarayan Gurukul Vishwavidya Pratishthanam Chharodi with CITA board of USA was to be started with the blessings of Jogi Swami. Ravibhai Trivedi's contribution in the development of Chharodi Gurukul is incomparable. He is a remarkable person with tremendous potential. The Governor General of Canada has honoured him with a Gold Medal of National Pride. He is an outstanding personality endowed with enormous intelligence but his body is thin having one ailment or other. Due to some difficulty in the waist, he was unable to sit on the floor. He used to keep with him a small chair. He was already suffering from waist pain and headache added to it. Mostly intelligent persons suffer from headache. Ravibhai was suffering from headache and despite various treatments, he could not be cured.

We requested Swami, "Swami, Ravibhai is suffering from severe headache. Kindly pray to Maharaj to cure him." Jogi Swami placed his hands on the head of Ravibhai with compassion. He pressed his temples with his thumbs and then said, "You have much gas trouble. Gargle with salt-water. Maharaj would do well."

We failed to understand the relationship of headache with salt - water but Ravibhai was much surprised because one doctor in Ottawa had suggested him to gargle with salt-water. Then he consulted another doctor. He too suggested gargling with salt-water. He came from Canada to USA to have the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami and incidentally he also suggested gargling with salt-water.

Blessings to the Historical Affiliation ..

Ravibhai became overwhelmed with the sign of Shree Hari through Jogi Swami. He remained with Swami for the whole day.

On 16 June 2000, in the morning Jogi Swami was performing Pooja. His blessings were needed for the affiliation with CITA Board. Ravibhai placed the papers of CITA Board before Jogi Swami and requested him in a prayerful mood, "Swami! We want to affiliate our Chharodi Gurukul with American Educational Organisation. These papers are related to that process. Please bless us."

With the remembrance of Shree Hari, Jogi Swami blessed the papers by making Kum-Kum Chandla on it and thus international affiliation of Gurukul began.

The Difference Between the Two Flowers ..

On that day, Swami was very much fresh, alert and in delighting mood. He delighted others by talks and kept remembering the devotees of Latin America. Meanwhile, Shreevallabhdasji came with rose flowers. Swami was glad to see the big and colourful flowers.

Jogi Swami likes to serve in the garden to cultivate flowers. He has served in the Garden of Rajkot Gurukul for many years and has woven garlands for Shree Hari.

Jogi Swami offered flowers to Thakoraji. Then he picked up a big flower and said, "O! These flowers are very big." Thereafter, he said, "Flowers are big but they are not having the aroma as our Indian flowers have." He put down the flower.

Jogi Swami's remark was not only related to the flowers. Swami was indicating to the cultural difference between the East and the West. The life, much prosperous with material wealth, is of little use if it is not having the fragrance of spirituality. It will be as the flowers made of plastic. It looks to be beautiful but without any sign of life.

Jogi Swami talked about the difference between the two flowers. Then he remembered his services in the garden and the preparations of garlands of various flowers for various temples. He remembered many incidents related to it. He also remembered his Guru (preceptor) Sadguru Mahant Swami with reverence.

While talking about flowers, he suddenly remembered the flowers of *Guldavadi* (a kind of flower). He asked, "Here in America can we get the flowers of Guldavadi?"

We said, "Swami, we do not know. We have not seen any Guldavadi here."

Swami said, "In our country, we have various types of Guldavadi with good fragrance. Here the flowers are big and beautiful but without fragrance." Swami came back to first talk.

Blessings to Nandish

Interesting conversation with Jogi Swami was going on. In the meanwhile, our former student Rameshbhai Savaliya along with his son Nandish came for the 'Darshan'.

In America the dedication, love and virtues of our former students Ramesh Savaliya, Pravin Vora and Dipu Gajera are unique. They are like pride of our Gurukul.

Village Sajiavadar is the native place of Rameshbhai Savaliya. There were few Haribhaktas in Sajiavadar but after coming into Gurukul, the virtues of 'Satsang' developed. Amidst the atmosphere of material wealth, his virtues of 'Satsang' were not lessened.

Nandish, a son of Rameshbhai Savaliya had problem while speaking. He was not able to speak words clearly. Ramesh thought that if Jogi Swami blesses Nandish, he would be able to speak clearly.

Rameshbhai requested Vihari Swami to speak to Jogi Swami about the problem. Vihari Swami spoke to Jogi Swami about the problem and requested him to pray Shreeji Maharaj to bless his son with untrammelled speech.

Jogi Swami started talking to Nandish in a cheerful mood and asked him to speak 'Swaminarayan.... Swaminarayan...' The boy began to speak 'Swaminarayan...Swaminarayan' instantly with Jogi Swami. After some time Jogi Swami said with a resonant voice of assurance, "Go! Maharaj would do well."

Then he remembered an incident, when, with the grace of Shree Hari, a son of Bachubapa of Fatsar village, was awarded with the power to speak. Then Swami said, "Shastri, at present his two sons are studying in Gurukul."

The soul, whom, a great saint like Jogi Swami remembers, is really fortunate. With the grace of Jogi Swami, Nandish could get power to speak clearly.

Guldavadi Presented

After taking meal in the evening, 'Katha' was being read. The loving disciples of America had come from far for the

'Darshan'. In the meantime, Hasmukhbhai Patel of Karamsad came from Washington.

Hasmukhbhai is a brave disciple. People of Karamsad are always brave. Hasmukhbhai had been sending almonds for 'Annakut' every year; hence, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj called him as a man of almond (*Badam-wala*). There was another such disciple namely Pravinbhai Sheladiya of Dhari. Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj had visited their homes in Washington many a times.

Hasmukhbhai became very glad on the arrival of Jogi Swami in USA. He was eagerly waiting for Swami's arrival. When Jogi Swami came to New Jersey, Hasmukhbhai came there from Washington for his 'Darshan'. He brought with him the items for Swami's Pooja and garlands of Guldavadi flowers. Swami saw it and said, "See, how kind Maharaj is! We were remembering 'Guldavadi' in the morning and in the same day evening Shree Hari has presented it to us." We were also much surprised because flowers of Guldavadi can be rarely seen in America.

Why great saints' wish comes true, because they are always related to the Murti of Shree Hari, who is like a wish-fulfilling Gem. This little incident of Guldavadi made us realise it.

Jogi Swami became very glad to see the flowers of Guldavadi but again he repeated, "Guldavadi is good but not like that of our garden."

Really, our culture is the best amongst the cultures of the world and in such a culture, our Gurukul garden of virtues is incomparable. The flowers of this Garden are spreading the fragrance of virtues in our country as well as in foreign countries.

Light Moments

Vishwavihari Swami was reading the scripture 'Haricharitra Chintamani'. An incident relating to an old lady came. That old lady had 'Darshan' of Maharaj and she was charmed by the fascinating form of Shree Hari. With the grace of Shree Hari, that old lady could see Shree Hari constantly round the clock without any break. However, that old lady could not bear it. So she started to make hue and cry as "Swaminarayan has mesmerised me, Swaminarayan has mesmerised me."

On hearing this, Jogi Swami laughed much and said, "Oh! Old lady, you have become mad! Are you so beautiful that Swaminarayan would mesmerise you?" On hearing these words from Jogi Swami, all laughed much. Swami said, "Shree Hari certainly showers His grace but how can a broken pot contain water?" Therefore, Sadguru Gunatitanand Swami has considered that following of the rules of 'Satsang' with understanding is better than following of the rules of 'Satsang' by miracles.

Muktanand Swami says that one is mean who wishes for miracle.

The Tour has become Fruitful

Today Swami gave Vartaman to many children. He gave plenty of 'Sakar' (sugar crystals) to everybody who was present there. Meanwhile it was the time for Aarti. Chaturbhai requested, "Swami, please come upstairs to perform 'Aarti'."

Jogi Swami said, "I don't want to come upstairs."

Chaturbhai asked, "Why?"

Jogi Swami replied in his childlike innocence, “I would fall down.” Everybody laughed.

Substance was that it is not good to go much higher. It is good to be on earth. There is happiness in living like a servant (of God). Vishwavihari Swami said, “We will lift you and will ensure that you may not fall.”

Swami said, “Yes, if somebody is there to give support, we would not fall down.”

Again, all were delighted with the words of Swami. If one gets support of great saints in life, he would have no difficulty (in this world as well as in the world after death).

With the help of Vishwavihari Swami and Shreevallabh Swami, Jogi Swami came upstairs. These two saints were praying, “Swami, we are lifting you on this staircase but please lift us on the staircase of Akshardham.”

Swami came upstairs. Chaturbhai has created a good home-temple in his bungalow. Swami performed ‘Aarti’ in this home-temple. Then he moved about the bungalow and sanctified it with his footprints. Chaturbhai felt himself fulfilled and said, “Today the tour has become fruitful”. Swami was behaving innocently like a child and all the people were getting great happiness in his presence and were strengthening the ‘Satsang’.

The Other Form of Vamanji ..

On 17-6-2000, Swami was performing ‘Pooja’ in the morning. Gopal Swami came to offer a ‘Thal’ (food) to Thakoraji. He placed the Murti of the Thakoraji, which was being served by Jogi Swami and also placed beside the Murti of the Thakoraji

being served by me. Jogi Swami was glad to see the small form of my Thakoraji (Murti) and for quite some time he continued to look at that Murti.

Jogi Swami said, “Earlier this Thakoraji was in Prakashpuri. When Shastriji Maharaj entrusted this Thakoraji to you to serve, I was with him at that time.”

I remembered an old incident. I was recently initiated as a saint. Very few saints like Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj and Purani Swami had Thakoraji (Murti of the God) to serve. No other saint had such a Murti of the God. It was my intense desire to serve the Murti of Thakoraji. I had requested Gurudev to give me a Murti of Thakoraji to serve. He gave me this Murti from Prakashpuri to serve. Nand saints had made this Murti of the God using five metals.

The aged great Parshad of Gurukul Shree Naran Bhagat calls that small form of Thakoraji as ‘Vaman Swarup’ and adds, “As Vamanji has measured the entire earth with His one step, this small Thakoraji has moved on the entire earth.”

When Jogi Swami remembered this extremely holy incident, which is like a great support for my life, I was overwhelmed with emotions.

As Bharatji had the support of ‘Paduka’ (wooden sandal) of Shree Ram, in devotion oriented way of spirituality, the service of the Murti is a great support for a devotee. Moreover, when it is received with the grace of great saints, it is really a matter of great fortune.

Watermelon

On that day, Swami was in delighting mood. In the meantime, Vishwavihari Swami brought pieces of watermelon and insisted Swami to take some. However, today Swami was in a different mood. He told Vishwavihari Swami, "I don't want to eat watermelon."

On seeing Swami's unwillingness, Vihari Swami took back the pieces of watermelon. After some time Swami was in a hilarious mood. We could not understand why.

Jogi Swami said to Vishwavihari Swami, "O Vihari! Watermelons of this country are very sweet, aren't they?" Thereafter with a little smile, he said, "But you are not giving me watermelon. You are alone eating the same."

We can be delighted to listen to such a conversation between a great saint and his disciple. When Vishwavihari came with a dish of slices of watermelon, Swami refused to take it and now he said, "You don't give it to me to eat, you alone eats it." The unacquainted person could not understand the talk of great saints.

Today Vishwavihari Swami was also in a light mood. With a smile, he said, "Swami, when I gave you the slices of watermelon you denied and now you want it."

Swami said, "Now go and bring it."

Vihari Swami, in a lighter vein said, "No, now I would not bring." Like a nagging child, the saint insisted upon Vihari Swami to bring some slices of watermelon.

The conversation was going on as if between children and we were laughing. Vishwavihari Swami brought slices of

watermelon. Jogi Swami took some pieces. In fact, he did not want to eat watermelon but he wanted to fulfill the wishes of loving saints and devotees. Then Jogi Swami said, "Give this 'Prasadi' to Shastri." Vihari Swami gave remaining pieces of watermelon to me.

As such, watermelon disturbs my stomach. It causes me to vomit also, but whenever Swami had given me 'Prasadi' of watermelon, the same had never troubled me.

In America, watermelons are big and sweet. Vishwavihari Swami placed a big watermelon beside Swami and said, "Swami, look how big the watermelon is!" Jogi Swami smiled and said, "It could satisfy ten or twelve persons. Watermelon in India is not as sweet as that of America." In this matter, he was in favour of America. There are good and bad things everywhere in the world. One can see both the things exist in any country. In fact, world is made up of mixture of good and bad both.

Seeing Swami in a delighting mood, Vishwavihari Swami brought a bunch of big bananas. Swami asked him to peel one Banana, to offer the same to the God and to bring the same.

Vishwavihari Swami said, "I will bring it duly washed."

Swami said, "It does not require washing when the skin is removed." He is steadfast in observing the code of conduct yet with discretion, Vishwavihari Swami brought a peeled banana. Swami offered it to Maharaj, took a little and gave it as 'Prasadi' to all others. Shree Hari says in Vachanamrut, 'We are praising some object and not praising some objects, that we are doing knowingly to please our loving devotees. In fact, the happiness what we are experiencing in our heart, such happiness we do not see anywhere in the world'.

Things are the same for Jogi Swami also. He always remains engrossed in the Murti of Maharaj. He experiences the happiness in the Murti of Shree Hari at all times. Yet sometimes behaves outwardly and thousands of devotees become fulfilled.

‘Satsang’ in New York

A ‘Satsang’ assembly was arranged in the evening in New York. It was jointly arranged by Swaminarayan Satsang Mandal and Spiritual Development Centre. Shree Niranjambhai Patel, the president of both the organisations and his friends had arranged this assembly. Niranjambhai is really a great devotee. When Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj first came to America in 1978, Niranjambhai had come in his contact. In the American land of luxury, he has remained totally unaffected by the vices of the life style there. Being a psychiatrist, he very well knows about the mental diseases prevailing in America and therefore, his roots are more strengthened in the Indian culture.

Niranjambhai had firm devotion of Bhagawan Swaminarayan in his heart. Moreover, he had developed a unique love towards various streams of Indian culture and successfully synthesized them into unity. Therefore, the people following different faiths also gladly take part in the programmes arranged by him.

Niranjambhai had arranged a public assembly in a public school of New York. The place of the assembly was very far away. To take Swami to such a distant place was a great problem for us.

As Jogi Swami was approximately 95 years old and the place of assembly was far off, naturally he was tired and bored.

The accompanying saints and devotees became worried. However, Vishwavihari Swami tackled the situation.

When Jogi Swami came to the meeting, Vishwavihari told me, “Swami is tired and bored. He was unwilling to come here. Due to my earnest request and insistence he has come but he will not sit for long.” I said, “Vihari, it is important that Swami has come. How long he will sit in the assembly, is not important. Swami may sit as long as he wishes”. However, Swami sat in the assembly for a long time. He gave ‘Prasadi’ of sugar crystals to all. The hearts of the devotees became full of joy. Thereafter Swami left for the place of his stay. We continued the ‘Satsang’ assembly.

We were pained to hear that Jogi Swami was tired and bored. At the time of ‘Aarti’, we made fervent prayer to Maharaj to see that Jogi Swami would not be cross with us.

On one hand, the insistence of devotees was much and on the other hand, Jogi Swami’s body was very weak and old. We had to see that Swami might not face much difficulty. On the other hand, the devotees living here in a far off country (America) rarely get a chance to have ‘Darshan’ of Swami. In a vast country like America, not all the devotees could come to the place of Swami’s stay. Therefore, it was but natural that all the devotees wished to have ‘Darshan’ of Swami at their respective cities. Sometimes, the position of the attending volunteers becomes difficult between two rival streams. When we reached the place of our stay, we were worried about the health of Jogi Swami but Vishwavihari came along and said with joy, “Swami is in good mood, nothing to worry. Despite a long journey to and from, he is not tired. He talks with everybody with joy.”

We went to see Jogi Swami. Swami was talking happily. Swami fondly remembered 'Nes' of Kanek and his loving disciple Kalu Bhagat. In a far off country America, he remembered Kanek 'Nes' (a cluster of huts in Girnar Forest) and his earnest disciple Kalu Bhagat (a shepherd).

Nothing is more important than to secure a place in the hearts of great saints. Shree Hari and the saints are subject to love and Kalu Bhagat is an ocean of love.

Instead of talks, we were happy for a different thing. We were worried, as we had got the news that Swami was bored and tired. We were relieved of that worry in a moment. When we knew that Swami was in a good mood, we felt extremely glad. It appeared that Maharaj had heard our prayer at the time of 'Aarti'. However, at night more delighting incident happened.

Unique Festival of Roasted Groundnut

A festival to eat roasted groundnut collectively, was arranged at night. The students of Gurukul like celebration of such festivals. During the study in Gurukul, sugarcane festival, roasted groundnut (Ola) festival etc. would have been celebrated sometimes in the nearby villages. Therefore, the past students remember such festivals and when the saints come to America, they arrange such festivals.

An 'Ola Utsav' (Roasted groundnut party) was arranged at night. The saints and the students sat in their groups in circles. Vishwavihari Swami thought that due to long journey to attend a meeting, Jogi Swami would have become tired. Hence, let him rest without taking part in the 'Ola Utsav'.

Jogi Swami went to sleep and after some time the 'Ola Utsav' started. In the meanwhile, Swami woke up to go to the urinal. He saw people sitting in small groups around. He asked, "Vishwavihari, O Vihari! What are they doing there?"

Vihari Swami said, "Swami, they are taking part in *Ola Utsav*."

Swami said, "Then why have you not told me?"

Vishwavihari Swami said, "As you were tired, we thought that you must rest."

Jogi Swami said, "No, I am not tired. Let us go. I also want to attend 'Ola Utsav'."

When Jogi Swami joined the 'Ola Utsav', the saints and the devotees became extremely glad. All expressed their joy with clapping.

Jogi Swami sat in the row of saints. Vishwavihari Swami started giving fresh and hot-husked groundnut but Swami refused with a smile. Swami himself would select soft groundnut, would husk it, and then would eat the same. Swami's style of husking the groundnut made others to laugh. Normally one would husk the groundnut with fingers. However, Swami used to keep the groundnut on the ground and then he would press the nut and husk it. Thus, he would husk the groundnut and eat it. On seeing this divine style of husking, the groundnut all became glad.

Prafulbhai Kabariya, maternal uncle of Ghanshyambhai Vaghasiya was roasting the groundnut in the oven and was sending it to the festival place. As the festival was in progress, the loving devotees were taking photographs of the same. Again, Swami started comparing India with America.

Swami said, "This groundnut of America has a thick cover and the seed is small. The groundnut of our Makhavad, Dholara, Gundasara and Pardi is far better." Swami's words showed difference between American's materialism and India's spiritualism.

Thus, Jogi Swami continued to eat groundnut for quite some time. Vihari thought that if Swami would take more groundnuts, it would disturb his stomach. Therefore, he took groundnut away from Swami, but Jogi Swami was in a different mood today. He took back the groundnut. Vishwavihari again took away the groundnuts from Swami. Again, Swami with a smile took back the groundnuts. This game lasted for quite some time.

Jogi Swami gave handful of groundnuts to all. All the saints and devotees were eating groundnut with paste of lemon and chilly. Jogi Swami saw it and asked, "Vihari, what are they eating with groundnuts? Is it salt?"

Vishwavihari said, "Not only salt, they are eating 'Chatani' (paste) of salt, chilly and lemon."

On hearing this, Jogi Swami moved his head and smiled. He remained silent. This smile was meaningful. The meaning of his smile was the soul loves tastes and it cannot do without it.

Long time had passed since we saw Jogi Swami participating in celebration of this kind. Swami sat in the celebration for almost 45 minutes. The great saints mostly remain introvert. Sometime when they see outwardly, they could make several souls like 'Brahm'. They bear such a power in their sight.

Jogi Swami had travelled a long way to New York to attend a 'Satsang' assembly, yet there was no sign of any fatigue

on his face. The joy of 'Ola-Utsav' was unimaginable and memorable forever. The story of the joy of this 'Utsav' spread everywhere through the devotees. Thereafter, wherever we happened to go, the devotees tried to arrange such 'Utsav' but 'Utsav' of New Jersey remained incomparable because it was a naturally organised 'Utsav'. At other places, it was imitation, knowingly or unknowingly. Therefore, no other 'Utsav' became as tasty as that of New Jersey.

Unique Bridge of Faith ..

Date 18 June 2000. Yesterday Swami remembered the devotees of Latin America and today Virji Bhagat, a Spanish worshipper came from Latin America for the 'Darshan' of Swami.

The former students of Gurukul, Chaturbhai Babariya and Pravinbhai Pithadiya have spread 'Satsang' in Latin America. Almost everybody knows this.

Virji Bhagat had intense desire to have the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami. He went to Buffalo to see Chaturbhai. Chaturbhai brought him to New Jersey. Virji Bhagat was wearing white 'Dhoti' and yellow Shawl.

Jogi Swami was performing 'Pooja'. Virji Bhagat came there and prostrated before him. Swami became very glad to see this foreigner devotee. While doing the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami, Virji Bhagat's eyes were shading tears of joy. He sat near Swami and started doing 'Dhoon'. Swami became very glad and he also started doing 'Dhoon' with Virji Bhagat.

Swami does not know Spanish and Virji Bhagat does not know Gujarati. Jogi Swami and Virji Bhagat both do not

know language of each other but the frequency of their hearts completely matched each other. A bridge of understanding and faith joined two hearts.

‘Dhoon’ was continued for quite some time. There was no need of any preaching or lecture. The essence of all the scriptures was being produced by ‘Dhoon’ of Swaminarayan Maha-Mantra and all were ‘drinking’ that nectar. The sound of Swaminarayan Maha-Mantra was resounding in the every pore of Virji Bhagat. Swami was seeing at Virji Bhagat with graceful sight, and thus the initiation through graceful sight of Jogi Swami, Virji Bhagat was learning the things worth learning.

A question may arise in our minds that several people come for the ‘Darshan’ of Swami but why none other could feel reverence as this Spanish devotee? The only answer is that the surface of the mirror should be clean to get the clear image. The heart, in which pure love, devotion and faith exist, can clearly reflect the image of the grace of Shree Hari and great saints.

Swami blessed this Spanish devotee with ‘Prasadi’ of fruits and sugar crystals.

The devotees of Latin America do not know Gujarati language, yet they are faithfully following the tenets of ‘Satsang’.

Satsang Assembly in New Jersey

On 18 June 2000, a Satsang assembly was organised in American Vision Hall nearby the residence of saints so that all the people could get the benefit of Darshan and Satsang of Pujya Jogi Swami. Devotees from far off places had come to attend the assembly. All the devotees were chanting Dhoon with zeal when Swami arrived at the meeting.

Swami becomes immensely happy whenever he sees people reciting loudly the name of God. He had arranged constant ‘Dhoon’ in several villages, until his body was healthy. He himself would sit in such ‘Dhoon’ continuously for 24 hours observing fast without taking food or water.

Here in the assembly, on seeing the devotees of America chanting Dhoon, Swami joined them with clapping. A wave of joy swept over the assembly. A ‘Nad-brahma’ was emerging from the hearts of the devotees resounding in the hall. It was an evidence of what a great change the presence of a great saint could bring in the hearts of the people.

Swami sat in the assembly approximately for one and a half hour, which was beyond our expectation. Meanwhile one by one all the devotees worshipped Swami. Swami gave them the ‘Prasadi’ of sugar crystals and almond. This ‘Prasadi’ was also distributed in the assembly of women.

Meanwhile Vishwavihari Swami once or twice asked Swami whether they should leave.

Swami said, “No, still I want to sit.”

It was a common feeling of all that it would be good if Jogi Swami speaks a few words. Vishwavihari Swami requested Jogi Swami accordingly and Swami consented.

Jogi Swami said, “You may do devotion of the God. It is quite beneficial. We pray to Maharaj that He may shower His grace upon you. He may make you happier.” Then he said, “Now Shastri will speak to you.”

Swami came to the residence from the assembly. Vishwavihari Swami said, “Swami, today you sat in the meeting for long.”

Swami said, "We must, because if we leave in between the meeting, others would be disturbed."

Swami appears to be quite frank and innocent like a child yet observes the discipline of the assembly.

A 'Mahaprasad' in the form of a lunch was served to the saints and devotees attending the assembly by Shree Pravinbhai Vora (of Rangpur), a former student of Gurukul. Pravinbhai is having deep understanding and is a silent worker (*Sevak*). His reverence, faith and Love are unique.

Pravin Was Blessed with a Son

Pravinbhai had two daughters. He did not have a son. Within a short period, after Swami returned to India from America, Vishwa-Mangal Mahotsav (a grand celebration) was celebrated. Pravinbhai had come from America to get the privilege of 'Mahotsav'. Purani Gnan Swami met Pravinbhai. The nature of Purani Swami is quite kind. He asked, Pravinbhai "Pravin! How many children have you?"

Pravinbhai said, "I have two daughters."

Purani said, "You may go to Jogi Swami. He will bless you to have a son."

Pravinbhai said, "I am shy of speaking such thing to Jogi Swami."

Purani said, "Let us go together." Purani Swami took him to Jogi Swami. He told everything to Jogi Swami. Swami gave him some vows and said, "Maharaj would fulfill your desire. You shall go to Junagadh to have the 'Darshan' of Radharamandev and also to pray."

Gnan Swami said, "Pravin, Swami is pleased with you. You should not drink even water before you have the Darshan of Shree Radharamandev."

Pravin observed the vows as he was instructed. The blessings of Jogi Swami yielded the result.

In the year 2003, we were in America. Gnan Swami was also with us. In the meanwhile, a telephone call was received from Pravinbhai. He informed that, 'with the grace of Jogi Swami, I have got a son. After moving in various places in America, when you come to New Jersey a 'Maha-Pooja' and meal, are to be arranged at my residence'. All the saints were very glad to know this and the volition of Pravinbhai to perform 'Maha-Pooja' and to give 'Rasoi' (meal) to the saints and devotees, was realised. These are the experienced incidents of word accomplishments of Jogi Swami.

Painful Farewell from New Jersey

On 16 June 2000, we were to go to Dallas. On knowing that Swami would take leave, all the devotees were feeling dejected. Due to the proximity of Swami for a week, all felt as if they were in Akshardham. It was the last day of our stay in New Jersey and therefore, there was no patience in the hearts of the devotees. This occasion of farewell was really a painful one. The women were weeping in their separate meeting at far. Chaturbhai, Deepubhai etc. devotees were also shading tears.

Jogi Swami and accompanying saints reached the Airport. Later on we came to know that ladies were still crying at home. They had become uneasy. The extreme devotion can subdue even the God.

Vihari ! No Mosquitoes Are Here!

Jogi Swami was in the waiting lounge. He was looking through the glass at the scene of the airport as the planes arrived and took off. Swami said, "O! Very big planes are moving here and there but these planes are not like the plane Maharaj brings while taking devotees to Akshardham."

He continued to make some observations, "There are innumerable carts in our country and here innumerable cars are there. It is better that there is no dust here." Jogi Swami liked the cleanliness of America.

Swami again said, "Vihari, it is good that there are no mosquitoes here." After passing many days in America, he remembered mosquitoes of India and it made us laugh.

Vihari said, "Swami, there are no bees or mosquitoes here."

Swami said, "It is good. In our country, mosquitoes harass us much." Swami was in favour of America in this matter.

Vishwavihari said, "Swami, as soon as the people see bees or mosquitoes, they spray and destroy them. Therefore one can't find bees or mosquitoes here."

Swami immediately said, "Oh! It is not good; none should do such a sin."

How compassionate this great saint is even towards the harmful insects!

Arrival at Dallas ..

After taking heart-felt farewell from New Jersey, Swami arrived at Dallas. Purani Swami Bhaktiprakashdasji, along with the group of saints, was anxiously waiting for Swami's arrival. Swami Dharmapriyadasji, Sadhu Shantipriyadasji and Manu Bhagat were in the group.

Shree Dhirubhai Babariya, Shree Rajnibhai Patel, Shree Rameshbhai Patel, Shree Mahendrabhai, Shree Jitubhai, Shree Kamalbhai etc. devotees and saints were present at the airport to welcome Swamiji. As Jogi Swami came out, he was greeted with loud cheers of Jay Swaminarayan. Dhirubhai Babariya was the host. We went to his bungalow. He had played an important role in bringing Swami to America. So naturally, he was very happy. His residence here in Dallas is situated in a large plot of 5 acres. He has a spacious Hari-Mandir in his bungalow as big as any temple in a village of Kathiyawad. In the back yard of the bungalow, there is a spacious open land having big trees and crops of groundnut, corn and vegetables. A son of an Indian farmer cannot do without farming even in America. Dhirubhai had vacated his bungalow, shifting his entire family to other place. His house had been the residence of Jogi Swami and other saints. On the arrival of Jogi Swami, the entire Satsangis of Dallas, Babariya family and the residence of Dhirubhai Babariya had become fortunate.

Jogi Swami stayed there almost for a month. It was his longest stay in America.

A Satsang Assembly was arranged in Dallas Shree Swaminarayan temple to welcome Jogi Swami. The temple was full of devotees. Jogi Swami arrived at the Assembly. With the

Darshan of Swami, all felt happiness in their hearts. All felt as if they had seen a holy saint of the time of Shree Hari.

According to his routine schedule, Swami would get up early in the morning. He used to perform Pooja from early morning to 10:30 O'clock in the morning. Then he used to move Mala by sitting on a mat and the saints and devotees one by one would read scriptures.

Swami would take mango juice or watermelon during the daytime. At 5:00 O'clock in the evening, after offering Thal to the God, he would take Chapatti, milk and date fruits only.

Thereafter, the saints and devotees would read religious scriptures. Sometimes, Swami, with his talks, would make others delighted. In the evening, the evening 'Aarti' would be performed. Kirtan-Bhakti and Katha-Varta would follow.

At last, the verses of '*Niyam-cheshta*' would be sung in the lengthy rhythm. Thus, in presence of Jogi Swami, the shower of divine nectar continued.

The Americans Became Disciples

Dhirubhai has an R & D factory there. Research work is being done there. Six or seven dearly paid American Engineers were working there. Dhirubhai had a desire that Swami may visit his factory.

At the request of Dhirubhai, Jogi Swami came to the factory. The Engineers working there had never seen such a holy Saint. With the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami, they became overwhelmed with joy. Dhirubhai had earlier talked about the greatness of this Saint. All the six engineers were initiated into Swaminarayan Sampraday by Jogi Swami by tying 'Kanthi' and

giving them five vows. Swami's divine effect is of different kind. He does not need to give lectures. His vicinity inspires the souls to accept the shelter of Shree Hari. Those Americans did not understand the language of Swami. Swami did also not know their language. Yet a miraculous exchange of feelings was going on between them. The hearts of those Americans were overflowed with joy with the 'Darshan' of Swami. They had no experience of seeing such a bishop or priest before.

Swami moved in all the sections of the factory. The saints were reciting the verses of 'Purushsukta' and Jan-Mangal. Jogi Swami sprinkled the holy water in the factory. Thereafter, Swami returned to the residence.

Ratha-Yatra Celebration

3rd July was the day of Rathyatra. Day of 'Rathyatra' means second day of first half of Ashadha Month of Samvat year. In the region of Kutch and Halar, the New Year starts from this day. In the 'Vachanamrut' of Bhagawan Swaminarayan, the day, month and year have been written as per this Halari almanac.

The day of Rathyatra festival is celebrated in entire India every year with great joy. Rathyatra of Jagannathpuri is renowned in the whole world. This day is very important for the Gurukul family as Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj was born on this day in the village Taravada situated on the bank of River Shetrunji in Amreli Dist. in Gujarat state.

Incidentally, it was the centenary year of Gurudev's birthday. Therefore, on that day (3 July 2000) one hundred Maha-Pooja were organised at the spacious bungalow of Dhirubhai. Devotees from all over America had come to take

benefit of this Maha-Pooja and to have the proximity of Jogi Swami. The celebration of birth centenary year of Gurudev was to begin in presence of the auspicious saint Jogi Swami. Such an occasion could hardly occur on the land of America. The enthusiasm of devotees had no limit. The number of Maha-Pooja rose to two hundred.

In America, planning of group Maha-Pooja had been done since the time of Gurudev. The benefit of such group Maha-Pooja ought to be extremely divine. Every 'Mantra' would be chanted with reverence. The 'Mantra', when chanted with the narration of inherent meaning in brief, the devotees would be engrossed in the world of divinity. This group Maha-Pooja has worked as the lubricating oil in the tight - scheduled life of the devotees in America.

I have performed many 'Maha-Pooja' in America. However, this time it was entirely different. Divine pleasure of this Maha-Pooja experienced by me is still intact in my heart. Incidentally, on that day Jogi Swami was to be operated upon to remove the tumour of Hernia. All the devotees taking part in the Maha-Pooja prayed for the good health of Jogi Swami.

Operation of Hernia

Hernia of Jogi Swami has been significant one. It had caused Swami's tour of America. There must be some volition of Shree Hari behind this Hernia. Otherwise, the volitions of devotees of America would have never been fulfilled. Dhirubhai Babariya caught the opportunity in time and on the pretext of operation of Hernia, he won the consent of Jogi Swami to visit America.

As Swami's age was nearly 96, performing of any operation could be considered risky.

For the operation of Hernia, there are two methods. One is conventional method, in which creating a big slit on both sides, the tumour is removed. Other method is Laparoscopy in which two holes are bored on both the sides and the tumour is removed by Laser. In the conventional method anesthesia is not necessary, only local anesthesia is used. In the Laparoscopy method anesthesia is necessary.

In the first method, due to long cuts on both the sides, the healing requires more time. The other method is comparatively modern and easy but the problem of using anesthesia on a very old person causes concern. In case of an aged person anesthesia may not bring back consciousness.

Dr. Arvindbhai, who is from Nar, now lives in Chicago. He is a very good surgeon. He was of the opinion that at such an old age, we shall not take risk of giving anesthesia because later on it could be difficult to bring him back to consciousness. He wanted Jogi Swami to come to Chicago, so that he may have the opportunity to serve him. He expressed his desire to serve and see that the rules of conduct would not be violated. He would give a befitting treatment.

Dr. Ashokbhai Patel of Dallas checked up the health of Jogi Swami frequently. A renowned surgeon Dr. Ram was known to him. Dr. Ram was originally of South India and was very well known for his surgical skills.

Dr. Ram was contacted. He came to have the Darshan of Jogi Swami. Dr. Ram's heart was overwhelmed with joy to have the Darshan of Jogi Swami. He said, "I have never seen

such a great saint in my life so far. I have seen many learned saints but I have never experienced such a peace. I myself will conduct the operation and that too with the latest Laparoscopic method. At such an old age, there is no complication in Swami's body; hence there is nothing to worry."

Dhirubhai was also of the opinion that the operation should be carried out in Dallas only so that he could get the benefit of serving Jogi Swami. Therefore, it was decided that Jogi Swami should undergo operation in Dallas.

Due to the old age of Jogi Swami, it was but natural that everybody felt anxiety. However, besides all, Shree Hari Himself had anxiety. Dr. Ram was a renowned surgeon and he was quite religious also. He was the president of Hindu Society of Dallas. He used to organise various programmes frequently for the spread of Indian culture. He was aware of the rules the saint observes. He specially arranged for male nurses in the hospital. In India, such an arrangement could be made easily but in America, it is a very difficult task.

Moreover, USA is a country of insurance. All the acts and events are to be covered by insurance. One is required to fill long insurance forms. Due to old age, Swami's operation was risky. Yet Dr. Ram filled all the forms taking upon the responsibility of operation because he felt that operation should be conducted immediately.

Here at Dhirubhai's home, Maha-Pooja of 'Ashadhi Bij' was being performed. At about half past ten in the morning, Swami performed Aarti of 'Maha-Pooja' and Maha-Pooja was concluded. Thereafter Swami arrived at the hospital.

Somebody was assisting me ..

Dr. Ram was waiting for Jogi Swami at the entrance of the hospital with a wheel chair. He himself made Swami sit in the wheel chair and brought him into the operation theatre. Dr. Ram's faith and reverence was worth to be saluted. Sitting arrangement for all of us was made in the nearby room. Swami had to be in the operation theatre approximately for two hours. All the devotees were praying for the successful operation. Purani Swami Shree Bhaktiprakashdasji started reciting 'Jan-Mangal Stotra' by sitting in one corner of the room.

Amidst the prayers of all, the operation was going on. With the passing of time, the anxiety was growing. With the grace of Shree Hari, the operation was completed earlier than expected. From the operation theatre, we received the message of Dr. Ram that everything is OK. There is nothing to worry. Our joy had no limits. We were eagerly waiting for Swami to come out from the Operation Theatre.

After some time, Dr. Ram came with Swami. Swami was on a stretcher, which was being pulled by Dr. Ram himself. We must salute the doctor. Swami was in Supra-conscious state (*Bhav-Samadhi*). Swami was taken up on the cot. Dr. Ram was overwhelmed with feeling of reverence. With tears of joy in his eyes he said, "I have done many operations but my today's experience was really divine. I felt that I was not doing the operation. Somebody was assisting me. Some invisible divine element was guiding me and the operation was being done according to its directions."

He further said, "As Swami is very old, I was worried but it is a matter of surprise that the operation took shorter time

than we expected. Now we are to try to bring back Swami to consciousness." We were happy to hear his words.

Before coming to America, Jogi Swami had received a phone call from somebody. Again, 'somebody' was assisting Dr. Ram in doing operation. Who is that 'somebody'? Only Swami knows.

In serving the sick, none can be compared with Purani Swami Bhaktiprakashdasji and Purani Balkrishnadasji. They both have served Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj very much during his sickness. It is more difficult than to observe difficult vows. During the sickness of Gurudev, both these saints have served him according to his likings. With the sign of eyes of Swamiji, they were able to understand what Swamiji is needed.

Purani Bhaktiprakashdasji tried to awaken Jogi Swami just like a mother tries to awaken a child with a tender touch and words but Swami did not respond.

Purani Swami continued his efforts. The time was crucial for all of us. We were worried. We were praying Shree Hari continuously.

Shree Hari heard our prayers and after some time, Swami regained consciousness. There was no limit to our joy. Swami responded. Purani Swami tenderly brought him to the bloom of complete consciousness. Purani Swami awakened him by calling repeatedly, 'Swami! Swami!' He was touching Swami's head for long until he was awakened with his words.

Dr. Ram stayed with Swami, until he regained his consciousness in full. Then he instructed those who were attending Jogi Swami, to give him some liquid. We were to be relieved from the hospital, after Swami passed urine once or twice.

Vishwavihari Swami brought nicely sliced watermelon. Purani Swami requested Jogi Swami to take some slices but Swami refused to eat anything as the rule forbade eating in the hospital. Despite repeated requests, Swami did not agree.

It was a great dilemma because liquid food was necessary to take to know whether the kidneys' function was normal or otherwise, but Swami was not taking anything.

Playing a trick, Purani Swami said, "Swami! Take some slices of watermelon which would make you to pass urine and only thereafter the doctor would allow you to go to your residence."

These words of Purani Swami created a miracle. Swami thought that without taking something, they would not allow him to go. Hence, with hesitation he took some slices of watermelon.

After some time, Swami said, "Now I require to go to urinal." In fact he was not required so, yet to get rid of stay in the hospital, he pretended so. Then he said, "Urine is passed, now let us go to our residence." Again, Purani Swami requested him to stay.

At last, Swami had to go to pass urine. Meanwhile Dr. Ram came and said, "Now there is no harm in shifting Swami to the residence." Swami came to the residence. Everyone became very glad to know that the operation was successful.

That day all the saints and devotees in Dallas have observed fast. Ashadi Bij passed with fast and devotion. They took their meals only after Jogi Swami returned home. The news of successful operation reached India soon. In all the branches of Gurukul Dhoon, Bhajan were performed. Everybody was overwhelmed with joy to know about the successful operation.

Dr. Ashokbhai was taking care of Swami properly. In view of a little difficulty in passing of urine, a tube was fixed. Therefore, the situation of Swami was not totally free of risk. All were praying for the restoration of normal health of Swami. He got sound sleep during the night. The saints took the responsibility of serving Jogi Swami by turn.

I Myself to Do Pooja ..

Jogi Swami got up early in the morning. He told Vihari Swami, "Vihari, I want to bathe."

Vishwavihari Swami said, "I will sponge your body with wet clothes so there is no need to take bath."

Swami said, "No, I can't do without taking bath."

Jogi Swami took bath, though he was experiencing weakness and a tube was fixed, it was little painful to bathe.

After taking bath Swami said, "I want to do Pooja." Vishwavihari Swami said, "Swami, please take rest today. On your behalf, I will perform Pooja."

Jogi Swami said, "No, I myself must do Pooja of my Thakoraji." Swami started performing Pooja. It continued for long hence Vihari Swami said, "Swami, let us conclude Pooja you will be tired".

Swami said, "I would not be tired to do Pooja. I get freshness while doing Pooja." Swami continued Pooja for three hours on that day. Next day he continued his Pooja for one more hour and on the third day, he continued his Pooja up to noon, as he did before operation.

His state of being beyond body consciousness was wonderful. The words are incapable to narrate his greatness.

We would forget or forsake Pooja, if we have any ailment like headache or cold. Many would get rid of 'Pooja-path' on the pretext of such trivial reasons. We are body conscious while Jogi Swami enjoys the state of being beyond body consciousness.

Looking to the speed at which he regained his normal health we can feel that Shreeji Maharaj Himself was taking care of Jogi Swami.

Annual Day Festival of Dallas Temple ..

9th July was the Annual day of Dallas Swaminarayan temple. 'Maha-Pooja' and 'Maha-Abhishek' were arranged on that day of festival. Every year this annual festival is being celebrated regularly with great pomp. The devotees from far off places like Chicago, New York, New Jersey come to Dallas to attend the celebration. All the devotees wanted the presence of Jogi Swami in this celebration. Incidentally, Gnan Swami of Khopala was also there on this occasion. His 'Katha' was continued in the temple. The group of saints of Shree Ghanshyam Swami Kandariwala was there in the service of the temple. Everyone was willing to have the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami.

Here on our side, Jogi Swami was operated upon recently and he was experiencing weakness. The temple was away from the residence of Swami requiring thirty to forty five minutes journey to reach there. How to take Swami there was a problem for us. However, it was quite necessary to fulfill the wish of all the devotees. We asked Jogi Swami and he gladly consented.

The loving devotees had made all arrangements for the Maha-Pooja and Maha-Abhishek. In one hundred eight pots,

various types of ingredients and Panchamrut had been kept ready. The ritual of 'Maha-Abhishek' was being done exactly as we do it in our country. Ishwarbhai Shukla was performing rituals with full reverence. The entire atmosphere was filled with divinity.

At the time of Abhishek, Jogi Swami arrived there in time and he himself performed the rituals of Abhishek with sacred ingredients. Swami performed Abhishek of Thakoraji for quite a long time and with the Darshan of these divine rituals, the entire assembly felt overwhelmed with divine pleasure.

In the 29th Vachanamrut of Gadhada Madhya, Shree Hari has said, 'The devotee whose mind is extremely attracted and attached to the form of Bhagawan Shree Krishna, bears such characteristics as-despite being extremely tired by walking and having no stamina to even stand up, at that time if he happened to have an occasion of talks on the Bhagawan, he would immediately become desperately ready to listen to or to do the same as if he is not at all tired, or having been pained by whatever disease or having been insulted to whatever extent and at that time if he listened the words on the Bhagawan, he would be free from all the afflictions immediately, or he may be engrossed in royal wealth to whatever extent and at that time if he got chance to listen to the words on the Bhagawan, he would immediately become alert to listen to it as if he has not come in the contact of anything. One shall know that a devotee having such characteristics is firmly attracted and attached to the Bhagawan'.

Though he was recently operated upon and experienced weakness, he actively took part in the rituals of Abhishek for quite a long time as if he were quite healthy.

Past student of Gurukul, Shree Vinod Bhagawanji Aghera was the host of this event of Abhishek. He felt exhilarated with the presence of Jogi Swami. Incidentally, Jogi Swami himself ceremoniously laid down a brick for the expansion of this temple at Dallas during this celebration. After fulfilling the wishes of all the devotees, Swami returned to the place of his stay.

Vihari, You Have to Wake Me up

The disciples had come from far off places on this occasion to have the Darshan and to be in proximity of Jogi Swami. Popatbhai Radadiya had come since long. Maganbhai Vekariya stayed with Jogi Swami for four days. Bhanubhai Patel and other devotees had come in a mini bus doing 'Dhoon-Bhajan' from Chicago. In the evening, all those devotees came to the place of residence of Jogi Swami doing Dhoon-Bhajan. While coming from the temple, they were late. Due to weakness, Swami was resting. All the devotees had to return to Chicago in the early morning.

Vishwavihari Swami slowly made Jogi Swami to wake up and told him, "Swami! All these devotees have come from far doing Dhoon for your Darshan. If you were pleased, I would bring them for your Darshan."

Jogi Swami got up and said, "Oh! If they have come from far off places we should meet them."

Jogi Swami gave them 'Prasadi' of Sugar Crystals and 'Kanthi'. All the devotees felt themselves fulfilled. Bhanubhai is a sincere and loving devotee. His father-in-law Zaverbapa of village Khandhali was a great devotee. He had pleased Shastriji

Maharaj and Purani Swami Premprakashdasji very much. With the grace of a very great saint Gnan Swami of Virsad, he got a son namely Mangal. Mangal studied in Gurukul and became a pride of Gurukul. Since many years, 'Sharad Poornima' (full moon day of Aaso month) festival is celebrated on his behalf in Rajkot Gurukul.

Bhanubhai has got 'Satsang' as heritage of his father-in-law and has become prosperous. He is also very loving and has got much oneness with the saints.

All the devotees left the place. Thereafter, Swami said, "Vihari, see their faith (*Shraddha*)? From far off places, they had come doing Dhoon. With the Dhoon-Bhajan, Maharaj becomes pleased very much. If such devotees come, you should bring them to me and if I am sleeping, you should wake me up. None should be denied for Darshan." Grace and kindness were flowing from the heart of Jogi Swami.

Declaration to Celebrate Vishwamangal Festival

Jogi Swami was now fully well. Tubes were removed within five days only. His health had become normal. He was able to move freely now.

On 16th July, there was a festival of Gurupurnima. The wave of joy and enthusiasm had spread in the 'Satsang' fellowship. With the presence of Jogi Swami, the event had attained a great significance.

Again, the devotees from far off places gathered in Dallas. On the day of Gurupurnima, Maha-Pooja was organised. Jogi Swami attended the celebration from the beginning and he

himself did 'Abhishek' of Shree Hari. Jogi Swami became overwhelmed with joy and sprinkled the sacred water of 'Abhishek' on all the devotees. All the devotees felt themselves fulfilled.

Incidentally, it was the birthday of Rajan, younger son of Dhirubhai Babariya. Rajan did the Pooja of Jogi Swami and other saints. Ghanshyam, the elder son of Dhirubhai had bought a new car, which was also blessed by Jogi Swami.

On the auspicious day of Gurupurnima, it was declared to celebrate the birth centenary year of Shastriji Maharaj as 'Vishva-Mangal Mahotsav' and the devotees in America decided to come to India to participate in this celebration. Thus with several occasions of joy, a month passed soon.

Shower of Grace upon Dr. Ram

After the operation, Jogi Swami looked fresh and healthy. He was relieved from the tension of Hernia. He remembered Dr. Ram frequently. He said, 'Doctors in America are very good. The tumour is removed from the roots.'

What can we say about Swami? Dr. Ram removed his tumour of Hernia but Swami is capable to remove the pain and misery of human beings from the roots.

Dr. Ram had a desire to invite Jogi Swami to his home. He expressed his desire to Dhirubhai, 'You may please request Swami to come to my home'. Jogi Swami was also happy with Dr. Ram; hence, he immediately accepted the invitation.

Jogi Swami came to Dr. Ram's bungalow. As per South Indian tradition, '*Rangoli*' was created on the walkway leading to the main door of the bungalow. The gate was decorated with

flowers. Dr. Ram came to greet Jogi Swami with dry fruits, flowers and rice blended with saffron. He welcomed Thakoraji and Jogi Swami with great reverence. He offered dry fruits and fresh fruits to Jogi Swami.

Jogi Swami took one banana from the plate, removed its skin and put it in the mouth of Dr. Ram. Thus, Jogi Swami expressed his extraordinary joy. Such incidents rarely happen.

Jogi Swami performed 'Aarti' of Thakoraji in Dr. Ram's bungalow. He sanctified all the rooms with his footprints. For the operation of Hernia, Jogi Swami's tour of America was arranged and the tour fulfilled the wishes of the devotees of America, but Dr. Ram became a specially graced person. He made a place in the heart of Jogi Swami forever. Even today, Swami remembers him with much love.

Meanwhile I had to return to India for some days. At Bharasar in Kutch, a 'Bhagawat Saptah' was arranged by former student of Gurukul Ravji Murji Hirani and his family, in the auspicious remembrance of his father Murjibhai. Therefore, Gopal Swami and I returned to India.

Los Angeles via Phoenix

Dhirubhai has got one factory in Phoenix. His younger brother Ashwin manages it. Mahesh Babariya assists him. Ashwin had a desire that Jogi Swami should come to Phoenix to sanctify the factory with his footprints. Jogi Swami visited the factory and fulfilled his desire.

Swami graced a plane to come to Phoenix from Dallas and from Phoenix, he came to Los Angles by car. Los Angeles is very far from Phoenix and it took five hours to reach Los Angeles from Phoenix by car. Due to good roads and better cars, it could

become possible. One cannot even imagine such a fast journey in India.

After some rest at Keshubhai Patoliya's residence, Jogi Swami was to go to Manubhai's residence. Almost everybody knows Manubhai Patoliya. He is one among the four students who invited Shastriji Maharaj to America first.

Jogi Swami was much tired. He had just recovered from operation for Hernia. He rested at Keshubhai's home. He did not want to go anywhere now. After repeated requests, he consented to visit Manubhai's home.

A group 'Maha-Pooja' was organised at Manubhai's home. Many devotees took part in that Maha-Pooja. Manubhai had a small swimming pool at home and the saints celebrated the festival of Jal-zilani Ekadashi many a times there. Manubhai had a desire that Swami should take bath in the pool and sanctify it. Swami kindly fulfilled his wish and then he went to Babubhai Savaliya's home.

Babubhai Savaliya is a silent, devoted and dedicated worker (*Sevak*) and devotee of Gurukul family. His native place is Sajiyavadar. Originally, he was not a member of 'Satsang' fellowship. When Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj first came to America, he came into his contact and seeds of Satsang sprouted in his heart.

Babubhai had many questions and much curiosity about religions and 'Satsang' fellowship. We used to sit with him until late night to discuss various aspects. He was a virtuous person and moreover he came into the close contact of 'Satsang' fellowship and the seeds of virtues within him blossomed. The virtues of 'Satsang' strengthened in his heart. He has a keen desire to keep everybody together with love for the development

of 'Satsang' and society. He has a great reverence for the service activities of Gurukul and he is equally dedicated, desire-less for the same.

He had made nice arrangement so that every devotee could get the benefit of Jogi Swami and everybody was satisfied with the same.

There is a beautiful temple of Swaminarayan Sampraday in Los Angeles. Years ago, the spread of 'Satsang' was negligible here but due to the frequent visits of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, 'Satsang' developed and at last, a beautiful temple was erected there.

Ramanbhai, Rameshbhai, Manubhai etc. devotees were delighted with the arrival of Jogi Swami. They had arranged a programme of 'Satsang' and Bhajan to greet Jogi Swami. As Purani Swami and Bhaktiprakashdasji were accompanying Jogi Swami, the devotees got good benefit of discourses.

Dhirubhai Sorathiya, Rasikbhai Patoliya and Patoliya families are blessed by Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. Jogi Swami paid visits to their residences and fulfilled their desires. Moreover, Satsang was strengthened in the hearts of Girdharbhai Butani, Rakesh Bajariya, Ravibhai Kheni, Ashokbhai and Vasudevabhai of Maneja and other former students and devotees of Gurukul family due to the arrival of Pujya Jogi Swami.

Due to the request of Batukbhai Kalathiya of Bhavnagar, Jogi Swami visited his motel in San Diego and fulfilled his desire. Earlier, Jogi Swami visited Bhavnagar frequently and he used to stay in the farm of Batukbhai. Jogi Swami knew him as 'Wadiwalabhai'. Thus, after delighting the devotees of California, Swami returned to Chicago.

Arrival at Chicago

In 1978, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj had come to Chicago very first time. At that time, there were very few Haribhakta devotees there. Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj used to stay at the residence of Arjunbhai Malaviya. Sometimes, he stayed at the residence of Chandrakantbhai Patel of Nar. Kantibhai Pithadiya had just arrived in Chicago. Dr. Arvinbhai Narwala, Manubhai of Machiyala, Maganbhai Vekariya of Rugnathpur, Chunibhai and his son Ghanshyambhai of Dabhan and Narendrabhai Shah (descendent of great devotee Bapalalbhai of Ahmedabad) were the only devotees at that time, however all were enjoying the Satsang.

Slowly with the passage of time, 'Satsang' spread. The devotees started to arrange 'Satsang' in rented hall. The dedication of Ramjibhai Pithadiya and his son Kantibhai in strengthening the 'Satsang' there is incomparable. They are gracefully remembered even today for their services to the 'Satsang' society. In Chicago, Maganbhai Vekariya and Popatbhai Radadiya are the devotees much blessed by Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. In the development activities of Gurukul, they have contributed a lot. Jogi Swami stayed in Chicago from 27-07-2000 to 04-08-2000 i.e. approximately for nine days to fulfill the desires of all the devotees. Thereafter Jogi Swami arrived in Atlanta.

Atlanta

There is a small but loving and enthusiastic association of Haribhaktas in Atlanta. Rameshbhai Suhagiya, Mansukhbhai Dhanani, Sudhakar Modi, Sanjaykumar etc. former students of Gurukul are pursuing the activities of Satsang there.

When Jogi Swami reached Atlanta, we also, after the completion of 'Bhagwat Saptah' at Bharasar, reached Atlanta to join him. From India Hariswarupdasji, Bhagawatwarupdasji and Vishwaswarupdasji also joined in our tour.

The devotees of Atlanta were very much pleased with the discourses of Swami Hariswarupdasji. Here Gujarati Samaj had arranged a three-day 'Gnan-Yagna'. A 'Satsang' Assembly was also organised in famous Shakti-temple here. A large number of Hindu males and females took the benefit of Satsang at both the places.

At Aiken

University of South Carolina, Aiken (USCA) is near Atlanta. Our SGVP Chharodi is associated with this University. We wished that Swami may sanctify the land of this historical association. Dr. Niranjanbhai Vyas in Aiken also wished to welcome Jogi Swami at his home. In the association with USCA, Dr. Niranjanbhai has contributed a lot like Ravibhai.

The home of Niranjanbhai is full of tranquility. With the arrival of Jogi Swami, divinity was added to it. Dr. Niranjanbhai and his family were overwhelmed with joy.

Jogi Swami then arrived in Aiken University campus. This campus is like a bridge between USA and India in the field of education and culture. With the arrival of Jogi Swami, the campus became fulfilled.

Alexander, the Chancellor of the university, invited Jogi Swami to his office with full reverence. He requested Jogi Swami to bless his son. Jogi Swami blessed his son.

Alexander is very clever, efficient and influential politically. He had come to India at the time of MOU between SGVP and USCA. From that day, he has been impressed with the pious atmosphere of Gurukul. With the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami, a never before change has come in his life. After the visit of Gurukul, he has become pure vegetarian.

On the occasion of historical association between SGVP and USCA, he had said in Chharodi, 'Jogi Swami is a capable saint. With his blessing, impossible would be possible'.

Professor Jim Coffman and other professors of the Indian team were pleased with the arrival of Jogi Swami. Though they could not understand the language of Jogi Swami, his presence provided divine inspirations to them.

Maharaj, please Have This food

Our group of saints was unique. Everybody had a skill of his own. The days were passing happily. Gopal Swami was in our group. He has a keen sense of humour. He used to make the atmosphere light with his jokes. A funny incident happened during our stay at Niranjanbhai's home.

Lunch was ready. It was time to offer a meal to Thakoraji. Thakoraji was placed on a big tea table. A decorative table was

behind the tea table. Many decorative objects were placed on that table. There was one pair of dolls, creating illusion of 'Radha-Krishna'. This couple of dolls was decorated nicely with the traditional Indian dresses.

Gopal Swami placed 'Thal' before Thakoraji and did *Manasi Pooja* (Mental worship). He prayed, "Please take this food, Maharaj!" Thus, after offering 'Thal' to Maharaj, he saw that couple of toys. Gopal Swami thought that here also Thakoraji is present. Hence he took the Thal to that toy couple and started praying, "Maharaj, please have this food."

If this incident had taken place in an empty corner, there was no harm. But the incident was happening in presence of all, 'please take this food, Maharaj'. The saints laughed a lot to see it. The incident was duly recorded in the 'video' of Hariswarup Swami. Then what to say about it! For a long time, this incident kept the atmosphere light. When Jogi Swami came to know about this incident, he too laughed much. Swami said in a lighter mood, "Gopal Swami appears to have got divine vision". Swami's light comment was true because we cannot see God in Murti of God while Gopal Swami could see the God in toys.

Boon to Divyesh for a Son

While Swami was in Aiken, a son of Arvindbhai Chauhan came for the 'Darshan' from Charlotte. Arvindbhai was a professor in Vidyanagar. His family is graced by Shastriji Maharaj. In Vidyanagar, Arvindbhai and Bipinbhai Savdas were closely associated. They have contributed a lot in strengthening roots of 'Satsang' in Vidyanagar. Arvindbhai has now settled in America.

His son Divyesh is very virtuous. He had no child. Arvindbhai knew the divine power of Jogi Swami. He sent his son Divyesh for the 'Darshan' and told me, "You may please request Jogi Swami to bless Divyesh so that Maharaj may give a child to Divyesh."

Divyesh came for the Darshan of Jogi Swami. Jogi Swami gave him the vow to observe fast on 'Hari Jayanti' and to move Mala and said, "Maharaj would fulfill your desire."

The blessings of a saint can not go in vain. With the grace of Shree Hari, Divyesh got a son.

Thus, Jogi Swami continued to shower his blessings on the devotees of America.

Sunrise at the House of Arun

After sanctifying the campus of Aiken University with his footprints, Swami again came to Atlanta. A former student of Gurukul, Arun Mendapara came from Florida-Orlando for the 'Darshan' of Pujya Jogi Swami. Arun was a virtuous student. He observes the rules of 'Satsang' even in America. His maternal uncle Bhikhabhai Sutariya Palitanawala is also a good disciple and former student of Gurukul. He has served our Surat Gurukul to a large extent.

Bhikhabhai talked to me on telephone from India, "Swami, my nephew Arun has no child. The opinion of the doctors is also not favourable. Please request Jogi Swami to bless him so that Maharaj may give him a child."

Arun stayed in Atlanta for three days, yet he could not get a chance to talk to Swami about his wish.

Once, Swami was in a very happy mood. Vishwavihari talked to Swami about Arun and his desire. Jogi Swami gladly requested to Maharaj, "Maharaj, please fulfill the desire of Arun."

Swami gave him the vow to observe Hari Jayanti and to move Mala. Swami suggested, "On your behalf your parents shall do one '*Purascharan*' of Jan Mangal (Recitation of Jan-Mangal Stotra for 11,000 time makes one *Purascharan*). Shree Hari would remove all obstructions and your desire will be fulfilled."

Arun's parents are quite straightforward, simple and frank. Due to Arun, they had to live in America, though cultural atmosphere of America did not suit them. The parents of Arun did the '*Purascharan*' of Jan-Mangal with due faith and reverence.

With the blessings of Swami, prayer of parents and grace of Shree Hari, after six years of marriage Arun got a female child as if Sunrise occurred in his family. Everybody was glad.

Thus, Jogi Swami was moving in America fulfilling the desires of several devotees. From Atlanta, Swami again came to Dallas. Swami stayed there for ten days. During this stay, a divine incident happened.

Give This 'Prasadi' to Your Son

Almost everybody in 'Satsang' fellowship knows Chaturbhai Babariya. He has spread the virtues of 'Satsang' in the Spanish people of Latin America and glorified the Gurukul. He has thus added a golden chapter in the history of Satsang.

With the grace of Shree Hari, Chaturbhai was happy in all respect but he had only daughters and he had no son. Being

a wise man, he had no discrimination between boy and girl child. He believed it as a wish of Shree Hari. His wife was a good devotee, yet she had, deep in her heart, a desire to have a male child.

The family members of Chaturbhai were of the opinion that when Jogi Swami had come to Dallas, if Chaturbhai requests Swami, Maharaj would fulfill their desire. However, Chaturbhai did not tell this to Jogi Swami. He thought that such a petty worldly thing should not be told to Swami. However, Shree Hari had wished otherwise.

One day in the morning, Swami was performing 'Pooja'. Chaturbhai liked devotion most. Therefore, after completion of 'Pooja', he came to Swami and started singing '*Prabhatiya*' (morning verses).

Jogi Swami was very glad to hear the '*Kirtans*' sung by Chaturbhai Babariya. In the meantime, Shree Hari inspired Jogi Swami in a mysterious way. Jogi Swami took handful of sugar crystals and gave them to Chaturbhai and said, "Take this 'Prasadi' but see that you only shall not take it fully. You shall give it to your son also."

Chaturbhai was lost in surprise. Manu Bhagat sat near Swami. He knew that Chaturbhai had no son. He said to Swami, "Swami, Chaturbhai has three daughters and no son."

As if he had not heard the words of Manu Bhagat, Swami again said, "Give this 'Prasadi' to your son and do not take it alone.

After some time Manu Bhagat told everything to Vihari Swami about the incident Swami said to Chaturbhai that he should give this 'Prasadi' to his son but he has no son. I told to Swami but I thought that he has not heard it. Therefore, again

he said, 'give the 'Prasadi' to his son'. The family of Chaturbhai has a desire to have a son but he has to tell Jogi Swami.

Thus, the matter ended on that day. Next day again, Chaturbhai came to Jogi Swami. Swami was performing 'Pooja' Chaturbhai sung a Kirtan and then read Vachanamrut. Again, Swami was pleased. He gave 'Prasadi' of sugar-crystals and again he repeated yesterday's words, "Don't take it alone; give it to your son also."

At that time, Vishwavihari Swami was sitting nearby. He said to Jogi Swami, "Swami, whenever you give 'Prasadi' to Chaturbhai you say that it should be given to his son also. But he has three daughters and no son. How can he give 'Prasadi' to his son?"

Swami said as if he did not know at all, "Oh! Is it so? Then Harikrishna Maharaj should give him a son."

After saying this much, Swami started remembering Shreeji Maharaj. For Chaturbhai it was a sudden shower of blessings. Some poet has said, 'Despite being insulted, if somebody consistently remains in the court of the God, some day a wave of grace of the God may sweep away his sufferings and poverty.'

Today Chaturbhai had same kind of wave of compassion and joy. Vishwavihari asked if any vow is to be given to him.

Swami said, "No! I do not want to give any vow to observe. When a son is born, they shall take him to have 'Darshan' of Radharamandev and Harikrishna Maharaj in India. That is the only vow to observe!"

With the blessings of Jogi Swami and grace of Shree Hari, after one year, a son was born. Earlier, while giving the 'Prasadi' of sugar crystals to Chaturbhai, Jogi Swami asked him not to

eat it alone but to give it to his son. He had preserved it, as it is. After some time when newly born son was grown up, he put the Prasadi into his mouth and fulfilled the command of Swami.

With the passage of time, the son grew up. Then Chaturbhai came to India with his entire family, made his son to do 'Darshan' of Harikrishna Maharaj. A 'Kanthi' was tied to the young one at the auspicious hands of Jogi Swami and Jogi Swami blessed him.

A Swing Made of Leaves of Banana Tree

In Washington, a great devotee Hasmukhbhai Patel was very eagerly waiting for the arrival of Swami. To fulfill his desire, Swami went to Washington from Dallas. A festival of 'Janmashtami' was celebrated with great pomp and glory in presence of Jogi Swami in Washington. The devotees from the places around were assembled to participate that celebration.

In Washington also, a divine incident happened as it happened in New Jersey in the matter of Guldavadi. On the day of Janmashtami, when Jogi Swami was performing 'Pooja' in the morning, after doing his 'Darshan', I told him, "Swami, today in the evening, we are to celebrate a festival of Janmashtami."

Jogi Swami was glad and said, "It is good. Decorate the cradle of Thakoraji nicely and today prepare the swing with the leaves of Banana tree."

It became a great dilemma for me because in India, the leaves of Banana tree are easily available even in bulk, but in America, it is very difficult to get it. In America, Banana has got importance but trees of Banana or its leaves are not at all

important. As such, there is no importance of parents in the western culture.

In America, to search for leaves of Banana tree is as difficult as to search for parents.

I told Hasmukhbhai, "Swami has advised us to prepare a swing with the leaves of Banana. Therefore, we have to search it."

Hasmukhbhai laughed and said, "Swami! We can have Banana here but we cannot get leaves of Banana. Yes, we can get leaves of 'Kena', which are like as leaves of Banana. Can we do with it?"

I smiled and said, "If you can do with imitated God instead of true God, then we could do with 'Kena' instead of leaves of 'Kel' (Banana tree)."

Hasmukhbhai understood the hidden meaning and laughed again. He said, "I will try to get it and let it be as Maharaj wish."

I said, "You try to find it. I am fully confident that as Jogi Swami has wished, you will surely get the leaves of 'kel', the tree of Banana."

Hasmukhbhai tried his level best to get the leaves of Banana tree but up to 3 O'clock in the afternoon, we could not get them. Therefore, I thought, "Shall we have to do without the leaves of *kel* (Banana tree)?"

I could hear one inner voice, "When Swami has said, Maharaj would arrange for leaves of Banana tree." And that actually happened. Suddenly Hasmukhbhai got the leaves of banana tree. His joy had no bounds. He brought the leaves and told, "Swami! This could be possible only due to the desire of Jogi Swami. Otherwise, it was a difficult task." We were

extremely happy. At last, a swing with leaves of banana tree could be made as per the desire of Jogi Swami. Shree Hari always fulfils the desires of his great devotees and saints.

In Pennsylvania

In Pennsylvania, Dr. Dhaduk was eagerly awaiting for the arrival of Jogi Swami. His native place is Jetpur. With the grace of God and due to his unique personality and efficiency, he has become a renowned neurologist of USA.

He came into contact of 'Satsang' at the instance of Rameshbhai, who is the son of a great devotee Manibapa of Ahmedabad. Manibapa had close contacts with Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. Ramesh had inherited the virtues of his father. He lived in 'Clark Summit' in Pennsylvania. We had to go there frequently. Due to the friendship with Rameshbhai, Dr. Dhaduk came into contact of Satsang. He was fascinated with the service activities of the Gurukul. The life of his wife is also full of virtues of Satsang. They have brought up their children on the lines of Indian culture.

Today, Dr. Dhaduk has become a close associate of Gurukul and his contribution in the development of Gurukul is unparalleled. He has constructed a big bungalow in the plot of five acres land. Whenever we happened to go to America, Dr. Dhaduk invariably arranged a celebration at his home and renowned doctors of America and leading Indians participate. There would be Maha-Pooja, 'Bhajan-Kirtan' and 'Satsang' discourses in the celebrations.

Here Dr. Kishorbhai Vekariya is also a loving and enthusiastic devotee. He also came into the contact of 'Satsang' society due to Rameshbhai. Incidentally, he is also from Jetpur

and he is a nephew of Amipara family, which has been in the forefront of 'Satsang' society.

All the disciples had a common wish to invite Jogi Swami to their homes to sanctify the same and to have the benefit of Darshan and Satsang.

To fulfill the wishes of all these loving devotees, Jogi Swami stayed at the house of Dr. Kishorbhai. He initiated both his sons in to Satsang fellowship by tying 'Kanthi' to them. Swami also gave vows to Dr. Kishorbhai.

Dr. Dhaduk arranged a celebration at his house next day. 'Maha-Pooja' and Abhishek were also performed in the auspicious presence of Jogi Swami. Large number of devotees attended the 'Satsang' assembly arranged in the evening. Hariswarupdasji Swami pleased everybody with his talks on 'Satsang'. Jogi Swami also gave 'Prasadi' of almond and sugar crystals to everybody with blessings. He gave initiation to Deepak and Amar, (both the sons of Dr. Dhaduk) by tying 'Kanthi' to them. With the arrival of Jogi Swami, the entire family of Dr. Dhaduk felt themselves fortunate.

At the House of Dipubhai Gajera

After completion of programmes in Pennsylvania, Pujya Swami arrived in New Jersey at the house of Dipubhai Gajera. Dipubhai is from village Ujala. He studied in Gurukul with us. His faith in 'Satsang' is unparalleled. He bears immense wish to sacrifice for Gurukul. He has kept his spirit of Satsang intact, even in the atmosphere of America. His son Nimit is also virtuous and having affinity with the 'Satsang' fellowship. He has oneness with saints and believes all the 'Satsangis' are his true relatives.

Ramjibhai Dholariya, Gopalbhai Virani etc. devotees also have become members of 'Satsang' fellowship due to Dipubhai.

It is very difficult to devote time and to look after guests in America. However, Dipubhai used to give much time for the 'Satsang' fellowship. The Satsangis gather at his home to have the benefit of 'Satsang' and the entire family of Dipubhai becomes glad. Whenever Satsangis receive the invitation for Satsang from Dipubhai, they participate in the programme enthusiastically. Though his house is relatively small, yet his heart is as big as an ocean.

Dipubhai had intense desire to invite Jogi Swami to his home and Jogi Swami fulfilled his desire. Swami came to the residence of Dipubhai. He was very glad to see the natural reverence of Dipubhai. Vishvavihari Swami says repeatedly that Swami likes to stay there very much. It was due to Dipubhai's innocent love.

The Parliament of Religions

Pujya Jogi Swami stayed in New Jersey for four or five days. During that period, a World Religions Assembly was organised at UNO in America from 28-8-2000 to 01-09-2000. Such historical assembly was organised by UNO for the first time. The religious heads from the whole world were to assemble there. I was also invited to attend this convention. After obtaining the blessings of Jogi Swami, I went to participate in the conference along with two or three saints. The event was a historical one and this occasion was a unique and historic in my life. It was but natural for me to be thrilled to participate in the assembly.

About one thousand religious heads from different parts of the world had come to participate in this conference. About

one hundred fifty saints had come from India. The Modi group of India had borne the expenditure. Due to the untiring and tenacious efforts of efficient volunteer Shree Bava Jain, this event could be possible. Shree Bava Jain had great reverence for Indian culture.

The general secretary of UNO Kofi Annan and many other celebrities of the world were present in the inaugural ceremony. The inaugural ceremony was really colourful, thrilling and spectacular. As per the tradition of Indian culture, an elevating conch-shell sound was blown. The prayers of all the great religions of the world were sung in the inaugural session of this parliament. It was a great fortune to listen to the prayers of the various world religions expressing the tune of respective religious. Really, it was a rare chance. The speech by Kofi Annan, general secretary of UNO, was really inspiring. Every word was full of his intense desire for the progress of the entire world. This parliament of world religions was organised to think over and to deliberate on, how the religions could help in solving the basic problems of the world.

The basic problems of the world are poverty, inequality, unrest and injustice.

How can poverty be removed?

What to do to remove the inequality and unrest from the world?

What to do to provide the justice to all in the world?

The thinkers had selected the real basic problems of the world and placed before the parliament of religions and it is but natural that the society expects solutions of these burning problems from them.

The scene of the assembly was really wonderful. The religious heads from various parts of the world wearing various types of clothes, having various kinds of beliefs and prejudices had assembled there. Everyone had to say something but no one was quite ready to listen to others. Everyone was talking about the need for co-ordination and co-operation but at the same time, they were trying to prove their respective supremacy. Everyone felt that the co-operation was much needed but on their own terms.

The voice of true wish for synthesis and harmony was low and uproar of self-wisdom was more. Many wise people saw this grand religious exhibition with pain in their hearts.

The voices of the heirs of the great 'Rushis' who have given to the world the eternal, comprehensive and live equations about the religion and spirituality, were representing their reverence to the same but they were low. There was no luster and spirit in their voices like the voice of Swami Vivekanand.

Dr. Karansingh gave a learned speech. Dada Vasvani spoke in a sweet voice about the basic things. His words touched the heart of everyone. Puja Pramukh Swami spoke in a simple and inspiring style, which carried the message of brotherhood amongst the human race given in 'Shikshapatri'.

It was heard that due to the pressure of China upon the organisers of this programme to detain Dalai Lama from speaking on behalf of the Buddhist faith, having the leading place amongst the World Religions, he was relegated. The disciples of Dalai Lama staged protest outside the UNO building.

The day on which this parliament of religions was inaugurated, most of the American media published news showing bias towards India. It was the worst example of foreign media's hate and prejudices for our great country.

Except some exceptions, the great personalities assembled here for the solutions of the world problems, were lost themselves in their own problems and the main aim of this event evaporated into the thin air.

The best lecture was by Ted Turner, the head of CNN channel. He had donated crores of dollars for arranging this Parliament. In his light yet effective and pin - pointing speech, he awakened the religious heads with his words. The essence of his speech was, 'Most of the conflicts and quarrels had been due to religions. The religious leaders have made the human beings to fight. Most of the wars and battles have been fought in the name of religions and the same has brought death, devastation and miseries to this world'.

He further said, "When I was young, I was taught that no other religion is better than Christianity. None others but Christians will go to heaven. On hearing such things, even in the young age, I was thinking as to where would the other people go? What will happen to them? Whether the heaven is monopolised? I experienced much confusion. At last when I carried out a deep study of world religions, I could understand that the God is one and there is no need to create separate blocs in the name of religions."

It seemed that an American thinker was telling thoughtful matters in his humourous style, which was expected from a true religious leader. While making the assembly to laugh, he gave some bitter doses of truth to the religious leaders.

Without thinking about its success or failure, whoever had given the idea to assemble the world religious leaders on one platform was really commendable. It was a sincere effort and such assembly should be arranged frequently. Directly or indirectly, it helps to break the walls of prejudices among people.

Not only that, it also helps in development of far sight among religious leaders.

To assemble the personalities of entire world and to host them is not an easy task. It was an important occasion to participate this assembly. It was a never before occasion to understand the specialities and shortcomings of religions. I could attend this great convention due to the grace of Pujya Jogi Swami.

Shibir in Legend Resort

In America, everyone wished to remain in the auspicious presence of Pujya Jogi Swami. Hariswarupdasji was with us; therefore, everybody had a desire to listen to his speeches. In view of this, a 'Shibir' (camp) was arranged. Whenever we think of 'Satsang Shibir', everyone would remember the bank of the Ganga and the lap of the Himalayas, because the place is important for religious programme.

Where to find the Himalayas in America? Where to seek the Ganga in the west? However, a place was chosen to meet the imagination of the participants to have the experience of the Ganga and the Himalayas near them.

Shibir was arranged at Legend Resort, a little distance from New Jersey. Earlier also, once a Shibir was arranged at that place and those who had attended it, were fascinated by the place.

Legend is a beautiful place. There are hills around the resort. Clouds play about them. Rivers and rivulets flow down with gurgling sound into the green valley below. One would remember here the Himalayas to some extent but it cannot be compared with the lap of Himalayas. The nature has freely

scattered beauty here but where to find the holiness of the Himalayas, because this is a land of luxury and the land of the Himalayas is the sacred land of Yoga and spirituality.

However, on that day this land became fortunate with the footprints of a great saint Jogi Swami, who always remains engrossed in the Murti of Shree Hari. With the arrival of Swami, the resort had become fulfilled.

More than five hundred people had come from far off regions of America like New York, New Jersey, California and Illinois, Washington, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Texas, Arizona, Louisiana, Connecticut and Canada.

The enthusiastic devotees and members of 'Mahila Mandal' had worked day in and day out to make this Shibir a success. The days passed quickly in various programmes throughout.

In the morning, with the singing of verses of meditation, the participants were meditating upon the Murti of Shree Hari. During the day, with the discourses on Satsang, the participants were strengthening their understanding and devotion. They wanted to listen to the discourses of Shree Hariswarupdasji Swami continuously. With various celebrations, the entire atmosphere was full of devotion.

One day, in presence of Pujya Jogi Swami, a programme of Abhishek festival and swimming was arranged in a big and spacious swimming pool of this resort. Jogi Swami performed 'Abhishek' of 'Thakoraji' with the sacred water mixed with saffron and sprinkled this sacred water upon the devotees. Thereafter, in his unique style, Jogi Swami swam into the water of swimming pool in 'Padmasan' for quite some time without moving his hands and legs. With the Darshan of Jogi Swami in such a position, all the participants became glad and surprised.

One day a 'swing' ceremony (Hindola Utsav) was arranged. Many types of swings could be made in India but here in America it is difficult to arrange for all the required items, yet the saints and the disciples worked hard and created a grand swing. The saints were singing the Kirtans of swing and the others were repeating the same. Jogi Swami was making Shree Hari to swing in a grand swing. Swami was in a good mood. All the disciples were thinking that Swami would be tired but in a great joy, Swami continued to swing Maharaj for quite a long time.

The divine atmosphere of this occasion touched everybody's heart. All the participants were experiencing as if Shree Hari Himself was being swung with the string of true love of Jogi Swami. Everyone had been lost in the joy of celebration, which was much above the physical manifestation.

One day 'Raasotsav' was arranged. In a big hall of legend, the male and female devotees separately played 'Raas' to the tunes of music and 'Kirtan' observing their own code of conducts. While playing the 'Raas' America was forgotten and India in its true atmosphere and spirit had been created.

Once at night 'Shobha-yatra' was arranged. In a decorated chariot, Jogi Swami sat along with 'Thakoraji'. The youths in their original 'Kathiyawadi' attire marched ahead with torches in their hands. With the tunes of the drums, the people played 'Raas'. Behind them, the female devotees played sing auspicious verses. The procession was colourful. The land of America had become colourful with the vibrant colours of devotion. The entire hilly area of this resort was filled with resounding of Swaminarayan Mahamantra. A tide had come in the ocean of devotion in the presence of Jogi Swami.

The American spectators had become stunned to see this never before procession. Thus, with various celebrations, the

devotion had swept everybody in the 'Shibir'. Along with all these celebrations, sometimes a maize party, sometimes a green groundnut party, sometimes 'Shakotsav' etc. parties were also arranged. The devotees participated in all these programmes with enthusiasm and joy.

As such, this 'Adhyatma Shibir' (spiritual camp) was really pleasant and joyful in view of arrangements of lodging, breakfast and meals etc. Separate programmes were arranged for the children and youth, in which the primary knowledge of religion was imparted with amusement and fun. In the question - answer session, their curiosity to know about the religion was satisfied. With the presence of Pujya Swamiji, the whole atmosphere had become extremely divine.

The enthusiastic volunteers and the young saints had taken much care in the arrangements so that the participants could do meditation, Bhajan and 'Bhojan' (meal) easily. They were cared for as if all participants were their dears and nears and there was no room for any discomfort.

Maharaj is Really Present Here

The four days of Shibir passed like a sweet dream. All the participant devotees were engrossed in the activities of Shibir. It was the last day of the Shibir. All were enlightened by the serene atmosphere of the Shibir. Every participant wanted the Shibir to be extended.

Pujya Swami gave everybody the 'Prasadi' of almond and 'Sakar' (sugar crystal) freely. The participants came one by one to do 'Darshan' of Pujya Swami. No one liked to leave the scene but the situation compelled them to do so.

Suddenly Swami said, "Oh! Vihari, call Shastri here". Vishwavihari Swami sent a volunteer to call me there. We were preparing to leave. In the meanwhile, one volunteer came and said, "You are called by Jogi Swami". I hurriedly went to Swami and started to do Dandvat Pranam.

Vishwavihari Swami said, "Today Swami is very happy". As such, Swami seems to be pleased all the time. Happiness of Jogi Swami would be different at different times. It is like the size of the tidal waves at different periods of time.

Jogi Swami said, "Shastri! The Shibir was very nice".

I said, "Yes, Swami, the Shibir was extraordinary. Because of your presence".

Jogi Swami said, "It is not the point. What can I do? Shreeji Maharaj is constantly present in this Shibir. Just now, the Brahmachari has offered 'Thal' to Maharaj. Maharaj ate it and He is very happy and showering His grace upon all the devotees. Since morning, Maharaj is talking to me".

Swami was sharing with us his divine experience and we all, listening to him, experienced ourselves fulfilled and overwhelmed with joy.

Shree Hari is always present at every place but one requires eyes of a Jogi to see him.

Jogi Swami talked about his divine experience of the day repeatedly. While leaving from Legend, Swami repeated this experience in the lift also with a great joy. Today, the ocean of his joy was flowing over the shores and we were enjoying a divine bath under the fall of his divine sea.

Thus with an extraordinary divine experience of Swami, this legendary 'Shibir' at Legend Resort was over.

Arrival at the Residence of Paghdal Family

After the conclusion of the Shibir, Pujya Jogi Swami went to Gordhanbhai Paghdal's home at Bloomfield.

Gordhanbhai was among the four students who invited Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj to America for the first time. Gordhanbhai, Virjibhai, Mansukhbhai, Girish, Dinesh, Pravin, daughters and sons-in-law form a big Paghdal family. They regularly assemble to do 'Bhajan - Smaran'.

Jay Dhaduk, living in this area is a unique personality. His silent dedication is incomparable and his understanding is praiseworthy. He has great reverence towards the service activities of Gurukul and he has contributed a lot in the development of the Gurukul. As they all wished to live with Jogi Swami for some time, Swami arrived here to fulfill their wish. All the devotees felt great joy in their hearts. From there Swami again went to the home of Chaturbhai. During this period, programme of 'Thal' and 'Pooja' was arranged at the home of Arunbhai Ribadiya. Now the next destination of Swami's tour was Latin America.

In Merrik

Before going to the Latin America, Pujya Swami blessed the home of Mohanbhai Patel and Pratapbhai Jobanputra in New York with his arrival. Both these families came into contact of Pujya Shastriji Maharaj in the year of 1978 and since then they had strengthened their association with the 'Satsang' fellowship. Their family members also observe the rules of 'Satsang'. Their homes are like temples. The entire family serves Shree Hari with great love and reverence. On seeing their affection, Jogi Swami arrived at their homes and stayed for a night there to fulfill their wish.

In Latin America

One of the main objectives of Jogi Swami's foreign tour was to fulfill the auspicious wishes of the devotees of Latin America. How the 'Satsang' spread in the Latin America is well known, hence I avoid the repetition. However, I cannot stop my heart to narrate one thing arising in my heart frequently on seeing these Latin American devotees.

The climate of this little Latin American country is similar to that of India. The physical structure of the people of this country is also alike our people. The voice from the depth of my heart says that sometime in the remote past the ancestors of these people had relations with the Aryans of Asia. The condition of these Latin Americans living under the Shadow of a huge country like America can be compared to a plant living under a big shady tree. These people are not wealthy as Americans are, but if we compare them in the sphere of love and reverence of their hearts, they are a thousand times richer than Americans. Their love is like the love of '*Vrajavasi*'. These people have great faith and reverence for the saints.

At the beginning of Uddhav Sampraday (Swaminarayan Sampraday), the Bhagawan Swaminarayan showed divine miracles to the people. These Latin American devotees are experiencing such divine things with the grace of Shree Hari. It is said and heard that if one's food is holy and pure; his heart would be pure and pious. However, here we can see a wonderful thing. The food and the habits and even culture of these people are quite different yet they can have the image of the God in their hearts.

Many so-called religious people talk about purity of food and water but their hearts could be seen full of vices like

attachment, envy, deceit and ego. Though they maintain purity of food, yet their thoughts are narrow and full of malice. They can hardly experience the divinity of life. Why such paradox is? It is difficult to find answer.

In Bhagawat Gita, purity of food and purity of sentiments have been discussed. Bhagawan Swaminarayan emphasised upon the mental as well as physical piousness. In olden times, lanterns of kerosene were used. The glass of the lantern should be clean at its inner as well as outer side. Otherwise, one cannot get pure light. To understand its importance, one must read 18th Vachanamrut of Gadhada 1st canto along with 2nd Vachanamrut of Gadhada middle canto. Even after reading of these two Vachanamrut, if one is not convinced, he must read 14th Vachanamrut of Vadtal chapter. In that 'Vachanamrut' on the occasion of 'Vaghari' (a person belonging to cast Vaghari) of Vadodara experienced 'Samadhi' (a state of deep meditation), Shree Hari has told to Vaidya Ramchandra of Vadodara, very important thing.

Then Shreeji Maharaj said, "In the religious scriptures, the duties (Dharma) of human beings according to his 'Varnashram' are described. If a person violates his duties, the people would think him as unworthy and if respect and reverence is developed in his heart for the God and his saints, he would be rewarded with redemption of sin of violating the rules of 'Varnashram Dharma' and that soul becomes extremely pious".

"If a person betrays the God and His saints, due to such a sinful act, he loses all the merits he had earned by practicing the Varnashram Dharma".

"A person, even if he is a great sinner, if he takes refuge of a great saint, he becomes extremely pious and attains the

highest state of meditation i.e. Samadhi. A person however, more religious he may be, if he is malicious towards a great saint, he is a great sinner and he could never have the 'Darshan' of the God in his heart. Therefore, a person who is considered as sinner by an averse person, is not a sinner and a person is not religious, who is considered as religious by an averse person."

The grace of Shree Hari and great saints sanctifies the 'Jivas'. The power of Shree Hari, as an uplifter of the sinful, is working in Latin America. The hearts of Latin Americans are free of malice and full of pure love. Therefore, their hearts can clearly reflect the image of Shree Hari. In his tour of Latin America, Jogi Swami was accompanied by Vishvavihari Swami, Shreevallabhadasji and Vashram Bhagat. Dhirubhai Babariya, Dipubhai Gajera, Dineshbhai Gajera had also joined.

Jogi Swami took his seat on the flight from New Jersey to Santa Domingo. Incidentally, the president of Santa Domingo, Hipolito Mejia was also on that flight. Dhirubhai Babariya gave him the introduction of Swami. He came to the seat of Jogi Swami. He became extremely glad to see the great personality of Jogi Swami. He got information in detail about Gurukul from Dhirubhai. He sat with Jogi Swami for some time. He liked the scarves (turbans) on the heads of the Saints. He put on the turban of Vashram Bhagat and got photographs of himself in that style. Wearing the turban, he moved about on the whole plane. The fellow passengers gladly welcomed him.

He requested Swami, "Swami, you are going to become our respected guest. I welcome you on behalf of Dominican Republic. With your arrival, our country would be blessed. Please bless us to make our people happy".

Pujya Swami blessed him and gave him the sanctified offering of almond and sugar crystals. The plane landed at the

international airport of Santa Domingo. In the VIP lounge, preparations were made to felicitate the Saint. A great number of Latin American people were present to welcome Jogi Swami.

Good publicity was given about the arrival of Jogi Swami in the local media. Therefore, Latin American people were eager to see him.

As soon as Jogi Swami came out of the airport, the devotees became overwhelmed and made sound of joy. The airport resounded with the 'Dhoon' of Swaminarayan Maha-Mantra. The devotees could not contain their joy on seeing Jogi Swami. They started doing 'Dandvat Pranam' to him. They personally met every saint and welcomed them. The saints and devotees were unable to understand the language of each other. However, they could understand the language of true love and reverence of their hearts and the language had become secondary. Here only one language was working and that was the language of the tears of joy overflowing from the eyes of the devotees. Many devotees went round the Swami and started dancing. Swami also started doing 'Dhoon' with everybody and he smiled at everyone.

One who hesitates or blushes cannot do devotion. These foreigners are more expressive than our people are. They have no hesitation in expressing their feelings hence they can dance on the road in public. We Indians can do little of it.

The Swami came to the place of his stay. The disciples had brought food, vegetables and fruits in a large quantity. The quantity of food they had brought could last for four months. It was difficult to contain the flow of their love and reverence.

It was the pious day of Jal-Zilani Ekadashi. A programme to have bath in the sea was organised on that day. Jogi Swami came to the place where Pujya Gurudev had taken a sea-bath,

years ago. Swami along with the saints and disciples performed 'Abhishek' of Thakoraji in the sea. The Swami himself took bath in the sea and sprinkled the water on every disciple. The Latin American disciples were fortunate enough to have the sprinkles with blessings from a great saint of our time, capable to wash out the evils of so many births of human beings.

Maharaj Would Come to Take You ..

In Latin America, the affection and devotion of Suresh Bhagat, Yogesh Bhagat, Ramanand Bhagat, Ghanshyam Bhagat and such others are incomparable. Despite several adverse circumstances, these disciples are observing the rules of 'Satsang'. One of them is Virji Bhagat. Whenever there was a 'Satsang' meeting, he used to arrange for the 'Thal' of Maharaj and distributed it to the devotees with reverence.

As Swami arrived, Virjibhagat brought a big 'Thal' of fruits and other 'Farali' food items.

Jogi Swami was about to stand up. Dhirubhai said to Swami, "Swami! See this Virjibhagat has made a nice arrangement to give 'Prasad' to the devotees. He has made all 'Farali' items".

Jogi Swami was very glad to see dishes of various food items. Jogi Swami placed his hand on the head of Virji Bhagat and said, "Bravo, Maharaj would come to take you". Thus, Virji Bhagat got the fruit of his services.

Dhirubhai Babariya explained to Virji Bhagat about the blessing of Swami in English. On hearing this, he began to dance with joy.

If great saints shower their grace, the same can destroy all the bondages of 'Maya' in a moment. The glory of surrendering self to Shree Hari with humbleness and true love of heart has a great effect. The grace of great saints can destroy the sins of ages of a human being.

In Shreemad Bhagawat, Shukdevji has explained to Parikshit the meaning of surrender to the God. As a little spark can destroy a heap of explosives, as on the rise of the sun fog disappears so also if one accepts the shelter of 'Narayan' (God), all his sins could be destroyed.

Shree Hari Himself is kind to the people surrendering to Him. He is the uplifter of the great sinners even and can make the downtrodden people pious. These virtues of Shree Hari are as if taking shape for the devotees of Latin America.

With the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami, the hearts and minds of these Latin American people were dancing with joy. May it be a place of saints' residence or an assembly; they were not ready to go away from Swami. There were long queues of devotees to have 'Vartaman' and Swami did not tire to tie 'Kanthi' to these people.

Public Assembly in Latin America ..

A public assembly was arranged here. Dhirubhai Babariya and Dipubhai Gajera addressed the meeting in English. The Spanish devotee Gordhan Bhagat translated it into Spanish.

Today Vishwavihari Swami was in good mood. He gave a discourse on the importance of saints. Dhirubhai instantly translated it into English. Vishvavihari Swami was speaking in Gujarati, Dhirubhai was translating and speaking in English

and at the same time, Suresh Bhagat was translating the same into Spanish.

Here Jogi Swami was also in a good mood. The love of Latin American devotees gave him more and more freshness. We could not see any symptom of fatigue over his face. Vishwavihari Swami requested Jogi Swami, "Swami, please speak a few words of blessings".

Jogi Swami, while giving blessings, said, "This human birth is very rare. One cannot get this human life even by giving millions of rupees. The human life cannot be obtained frequently. So, we should not let it go in vain".

Jogi Swami is now in advanced age. Therefore, if we insist that he speak a few words, he would say, "You are doing devotion and continue to do so. There is a great benefit in doing devotion". Thus, generally, he speaks a few sentences but here Swami talked to Latin Americans about the importance and purpose of human life, which was a befitting, and worth telling thing to them.

There is an incident mentioned in the 'Vachanamrut'. Shree Hari arrived in village Khambhada from Sarangpur. There were no Satsangis in that village at that time but people of that village were devout. Shreeji Maharaj told them to observe 'Panch Vartaman' (Five principles of good conduct). Such thing was happening in Latin America.

Thus in Latin America, the time passed with the speed of lightning. Everybody had thought that the long journey would tire Swami but Pujya Swami looked more and more energetic and fresh during the journey of Latin America. He looked fresh as if with the love and affection of Latin American devotees, he experienced freshness. Thus after concluding a historic religious tour successfully, Swami again returned to New Jersey. This

time Swami stayed at the home of Rameshbhai Savaliya, a former student of Gurukul. The love and dedication of Rameshbhai is unique. We would like to remember Jivrajbhai Vasani and Madhubhai Mandanka along with Rameshbhai. All the three are brothers-in-law in relation. These disciples could not be at rest without listening to discourses on 'Satsang' (*Katha-Varta*).

In Canada

When Swami was visiting America, the devotees in Canada also heartily wished to have 'Darshan' and 'Satsang' of Pujya Swami. They wanted Swami to visit Canada. In 1983, when Pujya Gurudev first visited Canada, the seeds of 'Satsang' were sown there.

With the insistence of loving devotees of Canada, Jogi Swami, Purani Swami Shree Bhaktiprakashdasji and other saints went to Canada in the cars of Dineshbhai Gajera and Dipubhai Gajera. On the way to Johnston, we stayed at the home of Dr. Dilipbhai. On the next day, we all reached the motel of Mansukhbhai Paghadal at city Rome.

Swami proceeded from the city of Rom. On the way, we reached the river Niagara flowing between America and Canada. The world famous Niagara fall is nearby. This fall is considered a wonder of nature. There are many falls in the world but the beauty of Niagara is unique. Very big flow of river Niagara falls from the height of a few hundred feet. Its roaring sound can be heard from far. The water particles emanating from the fall create clouds, which can be enjoyed even from far. It creates rainbows every day. At night, in the lighting arranged there, it gives the impression of celestial city

(*Gandharvanagari*). Millions of tourists come to see this rare spot of natural beauty. During winter, the waterfall assumes the form of ice. The river seems to be more beautiful. The Golden rays of the sun falling upon the flowing water, gives the illusion of colourful crystal gems.

Whenever Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj went to America, he never missed an opportunity to go there. Reverend Jogi Swami stood near the fall. He pointed his hand at the fall and said, "Oh! See how much of water is flowing! How great is the creation of God! If we had water of this amount in our country, the people would have been prosperous".

For Jogi Swami it was not merely a flow of water. It was the beautiful expression of God and the good wishes for the Indian people as well. Like Niagara fall, the fall of Love and grace always flow from the heart of a true saint and it is more beautiful than any waterfall in the world.

In Canada, Swami stayed at the home of Bhogibhai Patel for a night. Bhogibhai is a very good devotee and now he has settled in America.

On 16/9/2000 in the morning, programmes of lunch, an assembly and session of meditation were arranged at the residence of Sumanbhai Patel, who is a leading Haribhakta. Purani Swami, with the cassette of Dhyan-Chintamani, helped all the devotees to meditate upon the Murti of Shree Hari and with the discourse on Shree Hari's divine actions (*Charitras*), delighted all the devotees.

In the afternoon, 'Thal' for Thakoraji was arranged at the residence of the loving devotee Anantbhai Malaviya. Swami took food there.

A Satsang assembly was arranged in Sanatan Mandir in the evening. A great number of devout were present in the meeting. Shree Chimanbhai Patel and other leading devotees welcomed Jogi Swami with great love and reverence. Everyone felt great joy with the Darshan of Jogi Swami. It was a rare occasion in this far off country to have the 'Darshan' of such a great saint attached to Shree Hari forever. When Swami performed 'Aarti' of the Deities in the temple, all the devotees felt themselves fortunate.

In the return journey from Canada, Swami stayed at the residence of Rasikbhai Patel for a night. In the early morning, he left for America from there. On the way, he again stayed for a while at Niagara fall. On the way to America, he stayed for some time at the residence of Dr. Dilipbhai Thakkar and then he arrived at the residence of the loving devotee Ghanshyambhai Mirani in the evening.

During the visit of Canada, Jogi Swami was accompanied by Purani Swami, Vishvavihari Swami, Shreevallabhdas Swami, Shantipriyadas Swami and Vashram Bhagat.

Dinesh Gajera, a former student of Gurukul, stayed almost one month with the saints along with his van. Dinesh's van was big and his heart was bigger. For the long journey, his van was very comfortable for Jogi Swami. One seat was removed from the van; hence, Jogi Swami could sleep well in the van during the long journey. On arrival of the destination, Vishvavihari Swami used to wake up Swami. Thus, Dinesh had got great benefit of serving Jogi Swami.

In New Jersey

When Pujya Jogi Swami had gone to Latin America and Canada, Purani Hariswarupdasji and I happened to go to Chicago. Devotee Popatbhai Radadiya, Maganbhai Vekariya, Pithadiya family, Arjunbhai Malaviya and Dr. Arvindbhai etc. had got the benefit of 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami and now their hearty desire was to get the benefit of the discourses of Shree Hariswarupdasji. Therefore, along with a group of saints, we went to Chicago for eight to ten days. While coming back from Canada, Jogi Swami came to Ghanshyambhai Mirani's home at New Jersey and after finishing the programme at Chicago, we also joined the team of Jogi Swami there.

Ghanshyambhai Mirani is a very good devotee. His entire family is good and devoted to 'Satsang' tradition. His relative Kishorbhai Thakkar and others are also loving devotees. A very good session of 'Satsang' was arranged there.

Now Kabariya family had hearty desire to invite Jogi Swami to their home. Amitbhai, Pradipbhai, Ashokbhai and Prafulbhai, all the four brothers have become good devotees, due to contact with Pujya Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. Chaturbhai Vaghasiya is their brother-in-law. Their love and service to the 'Satsang' society is really commendable. Swami stayed at the home of Amitbhai. It was evening of 25th Sept. 2000. Many devotees were coming for the Darshan of Jogi Swami. The reading of religious scriptures and singing of 'Kirtans' were done in presence of Jogi Swami.

Apply Clove Oil

A Haribhakta namely Dhirubhai came to Amitbhai's home for the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami. He is from village Panch-Talavada. He is son-in-law of Bhimjibapa, a leading devotee of Pithawadi.

Dhirubhai's father Shree Laljibapa was a good devotee of Bhagawan Shree Ram. He was very much compassionate and he used to provide food to any guest or poor person or visitor at his house. He has built up a beautiful temple of Shree Ram on the bank of a pond in the village Panch-Talavada. He has also built up an inn for the saints and guests there.

Dhirubhai has inherited the virtues of his father and 'Satsang' from his maternal side. Despite being settled in America, Dhirubhai has maintained his virtues intact. His love for the saints and 'Satsang' has remained intact.

Dhirubhai was suffering from severe headache. He tried many medicines yet the headache could not be cured. Dr. Kishorbhai, who is from village Krakanch lives in Altoona and is a good friend of Dhirubhai. Dr. Kishorbhai was also not a member of 'Satsang' fellowship but as he came into contact of 'Satsang', he became a good devotee.

Dr. Kishorbhai regularly sent medicines to Dhirubhai from Altoona, yet he was not cured. Thus years passed. In the meanwhile, Pujya Jogi Swami went to America.

Dr. Kishorbhai said to Dhirubhai, "Dhirubhai, please go to Jogi Swami. Jogi Swami is a great and capable saint. Go for his 'Darshan' and seek his blessings. With the grace of Jogi Swami, Shree Hari would surely cure you".

On the suggestion of Dr. Kishorbhai, Dhirubhai came for the 'Darshan' of Swami. He hesitated at first to speak to Swami about his problem.

There were many disciples near Pujya Swami. He did not get an opportunity to speak to Swami personally. He was hesitant to speak to Swami in the presence of others about his problem. At last, he got a chance. Dhirubhai said to Vishvavihari Swami, "I want to have 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami and as I am suffering from constant headache, I want to have his blessings".

Vishvavihari Swami took him to Swami and appraised Jogi Swami about his problem. Jogi Swami called him near and placed his thumbs on the either sides of forehead of Dhirubhai. After some time, Jogi Swami said, "I would say tomorrow about what you should do". For some unknown reason, Jogi Swami postponed prescribing any medicine.

Dhirubhai went home. Next day in the morning, Jogi Swami was performing 'Pooja'. He was moving the Mala. The saints were singing the 'Kirtans' and were reading the scriptures one by one. Suddenly as the rainy clouds gather in the sky, Swami had a wave of joy. Swami said, "O Vihari! That devotee, who had come last evening and was complaining about his constant headache, tell him to apply the clove oil on the head. Also, ask him to chant Mala with Swaminarayan Maha-Mantra. Maharaj would do well".

Vishvavihari Swami told Amitbhai, "The devotee who had come last evening, contact him on telephone and convey to him the message of Swami". Amitbhai contacted Dhirubhai on telephone and told him what Jogi Swami had suggested. What a miraculous effect of the compassion of Shree Hari and the grace of a great saint! The headache of Dhirubhai vanished forever.

Dhirubhai has met us many a time. He has visited India also. At present, he has no headache at all. While talking about it, he remembers Jogi Swami with tears of joy in his eyes.

See, how effective is the medicines prescribed by Swami for one disease. He suggested Ravibhai to gargle with salty water and to Dhirubhai; he suggested applying clove oil on the head. When Pujya Devkrishnadasji Swami was suffering from headache, Swami suggested him to tie 'Rotlo' of soil on the head.

The medicines prescribed by Jogi Swami may not be conforming to the rules of medical science. Even great doctors also may fumble but the medicine prescribed by swami would surely work with perfect accuracy. Swami's medicine means perfect remedy.

Farewell

Reverend Swami arrived at the residence of Pradihbhai Kalariya. Then Swami came to Prafulbhai Kabariya's home and stayed there for a night. The 'Satsang' tour of America was near its conclusion. There were only a few hours left before departure. At last, Pujya Swami came to the home of Chaturbhai Vaghasiya.

A farewell function was organised on 22nd Sept. As Swami was returning to India, a large number of devotees had gathered in the assembly to bid farewell to him and the saints. Dhoon, Bhajan and 'Kirtans' were going on. However, Jogi Swami was in a different mood today. Despite repeated requests of Vishwavihari Swami, Swami did not agree to come to the assembly. Vishwavihari Swami persuaded him as if somebody coaxes a child. "Swami, so many devotees have come from far

off places for your Darshan and if you do not come, they will be disappointed".

Thus, Vishwavihari Swami made repeated requests to Jogi Swami to come in the assembly. When he heard the words 'the devotees would be disappointed', he immediately consented to come to the assembly. Swami arrived at the assembly. He was very happy to see everybody doing 'Dhoon - Bhajan'. All the devotees took the benefit of worshipping Jogi Swami.

Everybody had a desire to listen to Jogi Swami. Swami also was very glad and spoke wonderful words. At first, he said, 'Jay Swaminarayan' to all. Then Swami said, "Good occasion has arrived. Muktanand Swami has prayed to Maharaj":

'Oh my beloved God, please come to my home

And how great is the compassion of Maharaj!

"O God! I was a very small blade of grass; you have made me as big as a mountain".

"Maharaj is the Supreme God. There is a great benefit in his devotion. Therefore, you may continue to do devotion". All those who heard, were deeply influenced by his words.

Jogi Swami likes these words of Muktanand Swami very much. Swami used to sing these lines very often with rhythm. While singing of these lines, the joy of meeting with Maharaj would be there. This saint, while living in the physical body, has become one with Shree Hari and his life is unshakable like a mountain. He has never attached to any worldly thing. At the same time, he never forgets that this status is due to Shreeji Maharaj.

In the farewell assembly of that day, Jogi Swami gave handful of sanctified 'Prasad' (offering) of almond and sugar crystals to everybody.

23rd Sept. was the day to leave New Jersey. Chaturbhai and his sons Ghanshyam, Rahul and other family members did 'Pooja' of Swami with pain of departure in their hearts.

Dipubhai Gajera, Pravinbhai Vora, Ramesh Savaliya, Dinesh Gajera, Ashvinbhai Gajera, Madhubhai Mandanka, Jivrajbhai Vasani, Arunbhai Ribadiya, Virjibhai Paghadal, Amitbhai Kabariya, Prafulbhai Kabariya, Vamanbhai etc. devotees had gathered in great number to bid farewell to Swami with the pain of separation in their hearts. Everyone's heart was overwhelmed.

The divine joy given by Swami during his visit to America for quite a long time was indescribable and then Swami was leaving. This occasion of bidding farewell to Swami was shaking hearts of everybody.

The Magic Disappearance of Sandals

On this occasion of farewell, a strange thing happened. Some loving devotee desired to have some object as a memory of Swami's visit to America, so that he could remember Pujya Swami forever. Bhagawan Ramchandraji had given His 'Paduka' (wooden sandals) to Bharatji. Shree Hari had given His turban to Ardesar. Some one thought on this line to get such an object.

Thinking on that line, that devotee decided to preserve 'Mojadi' (Sandals) of Swami as an all time memory of Jogi Swami, but it was not possible to get the same on request or by grace.

I think that when that devotee would not have got any straight way to get 'Mojadi' of Swami, he would have memory the incident, when Joban Pagi on the pretext of getting the

'Charan-Raj' (feet-dust) of Shree Hari, had taken up Shree Hari's Mojadi and had hidden it in his armpit. He would have thought that he would not get desired Mojadi on demand or by grace of Swami. Therefore, he thought himself to become Bharat or Ardesarji and have the 'Mojadi' with trick played by Joban Pagi and really, that devotee hid the Mojadi on the occasion of farewell!

The moments of farewell were heavy with emotions. All the devotees had taken their seats in their cars. The way to Airport was long. There was an apprehension of traffic-jam on the way.

None could find the Mojadi of Swami when he had to sit in the car. Vishwavihari Swami asked other volunteers to search for the Mojadi of Swami but they could not find it. There was some embarrassment. As Shree Hanumanji and other monkeys were searching for Sitaji, Vishwavihari Swami and other saints were searching for Swami's Mojadi. Despite intense search, Mojadi could not be found.

Joban Pagi had returned Mojadi, which was hidden by him in his armpit to Maharaj in time but that devotee did not return Mojadi of Jogi Swami when needed by him. The Mojadi hidden by that devotee could not be found!

At last, we had to give up the search of Mojadi. We could understand that someone had played a trick of Joban Pagi hence, it could not be found. Swami sat in the car without Mojadi. The accompanying devotees hurriedly purchased a Mojadi of canvas for Swami from a shopping centre on the way.

Thus leaving behind Mojadi of Swami in America, we proceeded towards London.

Much time had elapsed, yet the Mojadi of Swami has not been found until today.

Good Luck for Botswana

On 24th Sept. 2000, Swami once again came to London. The people of London are lucky to get the benefit of 'Darshan' and 'Satsang' of Swami twice.

Much time had elapsed since Jogi Swami had left India for America. Much time had been spent in America. Swami was to return to India directly from London but the love of the devotees of South Africa was calling him.

Shree Chandrakantbhai, Shree Harshadbhai, Shree Jitubhai, Shree Ghanshyambhai etc. devotees living in Botswana are originally from the village Nar in Gujarat. They earnestly requested Jogi Swami to come to Botswana.

This family has been the member of 'Satsang' since the time of Bhagawan Swaminarayan. Many years ago, Bhagawan Swaminarayan had come to the village Nar. At that time, none was the member of 'Satsang' fellowship in that village. Therefore, the people were unaware of the greatness of Shree Hari. Maharaj had stayed in the outskirts of this village. At that time, the elders of this family had served food to Maharaj. Shree Hari had become very glad with this pious family.

Due to the divine 'Darshan' and influence of Shree Hari, this family became 'Satsangi' and 'Satsang' has been strengthened. Though this family is originally a Patel family, as they became 'Satsangi' and accepted the shelter of Bhagawan Swaminarayan, the family became known as 'Swami' family. The virtues of 'Satsang' have been strengthened very much in this family with the passage of time.

Harshadbhai's father Chaturbhai was also a very good devotee. Kamalaba, the mother of Harshadbhai was like a free

soul. Shree Hari had given her His 'Darshan' many a times. At the time of her departure for 'Akshardham' Shree Hari gave His 'Darshan' to her and took her to 'Akshardham'.

The members of the family have imbibed the virtues from their mother. All the members of this family observe the rules of 'Satsang' with great faith. This family requested Jogi Swami to sanctify their homes with his arrival. Jogi Swami gracefully accepted the request.

'Premi jan ne vash Pataliyo, Shyam sunder sukhkari re
Jati varan ne rupe na rije, Prabhujine Bhakti Pyari re'

Means: Shyam, the God who is having surpassing beauty, bestows pleasure on His devotees. He could be pleased only by love and not by caste, sub-caste or colour of skin. Shyam loves devotion only.

On 2-10-2000, after a long journey, Swami arrived in Johannesburg in South Africa. Botswana is far from this city. This 'Swami' family had arranged for a small-chartered plane, so that Jogi Swami shall not face any inconvenience. The plane could accommodate 10 to 12 persons from Johannesburg to Botswana.

After arriving at Johannesburg, Jogi Swami sat, along with other saints in a small eagle like plane. The long distance from London to Johannesburg had taken time of almost nine hours. The procedures at the airports were also tiresome. We had a little fear that Swami would be tired but it was surprising that Jogi Swami looked fresher than all of us were. He was gladly talking to everybody.

The pilot and co-pilot saluted Jogi Swami. He gave blessings to both the pilots. Those European pilots were very fortunate to receive the blessings of Jogi Swami. These pilots

must have flown many flights and accommodated many tourists, rich and powerful, but today a pilot of the 'Akshardham' was travelling in their plane.

When Puja Swami got down at Botswana airport, the devotees became emotional. Apart from four brothers, Akshaybhai, Samirbhai, Mukeshbhai, Vijaybhai, Hasmukhbhai, Dineshbhai, South Indian Dr. Shree Ram, Snehal, Pragnesh, Mayur, Harshad, Manish etc. devotees' hearts were overwhelmed with joy. Puja Swami stayed at Harshadbhai's home for a week and made his home like a place of pilgrimage. The devotees living in Gaborone Francis, Lobatse etc. towns got the rare chance of 'Darshan' and 'Satsang' of Swami.

As Hariswarupdasji Swami was with us, there was no let up in 'Satsang' and Katha-Varta. The 'Swami' family had a great desire to have some permanent memory of Swami's visit to this place. After much thinking, all agreed on an idea of tree planting at the pious hands of Jogi Swami.

With the chanting of 'Stotras' of Shree Hari, trees were planted at the pious hands of Jogi Swami. There were not merely trees; they were trees of 'Satsang'. These trees would give the fruits of love and devotion. Jogi Swami was moving to nourish the garden of 'Satsang'.

Arrival in Pretoria

The devotees of South Africa came to know that Puja Swami had come to Botswana. Shree Gunvantbhai, Shree Jivanbhai, Shree Mahendrabhai, Shree Ashwinbhai etc. devotees of South Africa were very eager to have the 'Darshan' of Jogi Swami. They all came from Pretoria to invite Swami to come to South Africa.

Botswana is considered as Central Africa while Pretoria and Johannesburg are situated in South Africa.

Gunvantbhai Sodha is a very good devotee in Pretoria. Sodha and Joshi families belong to Rajkot.

Gunvantbhai's mother Godavariba was a very good devotee. Her virtues have been inherited by Gunvantbhai. Gunvantbhai lived in Rajkot in his young age. At that time, the Gurukul had just started. He came to Gurukul on bicycle for 'Darshan'.

As they have been settled in South Africa many years ago, the home of Joshi family and that of ancestors of Gunvantbhai were the centers of Gandhiji's activities. When Mahatma Gandhi was in South Africa, he lived with this family for long.

On 7th Oct. 2000, Jogi Swami came to Pretoria. In the auspicious memory of his mother, Gunvantbhai Sodha had purchased the land admeasuring 40, 000 sq. yards for Gurukul. He had an intense desire to sanctify the land with the footprints of Jogi Swami and a branch of Gurukul be started in this foreign country. As per the auspicious volition of Gunvantbhai, with the chanting of 'Veda Mantras' Pooja of Thakoraji was performed. 'Bhumi-Poojan' was performed at the auspicious hands of Jogi Swami. Jogi Swami sprinkled Kum-Kum, rice and flowers on the land. He sprinkled the water offered to the God, on this land and sanctified the same.

Gunvantbhai decided to donate this land to Gurukul to start a branch of Gurukul there. With the sounding of the Mantra of Shree Hari, one historical work was concluded. Incidentally, the sky started showering its blessings in the form of a shower as if the deities of heaven were happy with the occasion.

In the evening, a public assembly was organised in the Hindu temple here. Shree Hariswarupdasji gave a remarkably auspicious speech. Many people of Gujarat live in the middle of Pretoria. A Hindu temple was being created by Gujarati society here. On request of the Gujarati society, Jogi Swami came to this place. Swami performed 'Pooja', installed a brick where the throne of Thakoraji was to be built and gave auspicious blessings as 'May Shree Hari arranges to complete the work of this temple at the earliest'.

During his short stay in Africa, Jogi swami did many historical works. The disciples gave farewell to him. Here in India the devotees were eagerly waiting for Swami's return. On 9th Oct. 2000 after completion of his historic tour Swami came back to the holy land of India.

Vishwamangal Mahotsav

After Jogi Swami returned to India, with his auspicious blessings and presence, a grand Vishwamangal Festival was celebrated from 27-12-2001 to 31-12-2001 at Shree Swaminarayan Gurukul Vishwavidya Pratishthanam (SGVP), Chharodi. Incidentally, it was 175th anniversary of Shikshapatri, 200th year of Swaminarayan Mahamantra and also a birth centenary year of Pujya Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj. To celebrate all these three auspicious events, this Vishwamangal Mahotsav was arranged.

On the occasion of this festival, a grand International School of SGVP was inaugurated at the auspicious hands of Pujya Jogi Swami. As per the liking of Pujya Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj and Pujya Jogi Swami, Campaign of writing of Swaminarayan Mahamantra was started with the inspiration

and blessings of Pujya Jogi Swami. Thousands of disciples from India and abroad participated in this festival and several religious leaders blessed this occasion with their presence.

Rushikesh Sadhana Shibir

Before leaving for the Akshardham, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj had established a divine tradition of arranging a spiritual camp at Rushikesh. The spiritual camp arranged at Rushikesh in presence of Pujya Gurudev has become an inexhaustible source of inspiration for everybody.

After the departure of Gurudev for Akshardham, this glorious tradition has been continued in the auspicious presence of Pujya Jogi Swami.

Entire Gurukul family had an intense desire to organise a 'Sadhana Shibir' on the bank of the river Ganga at Rushikesh in the auspicious presence of Pujya Jogi Swami. Therefore, a 'Sadhana Shibir' was arranged at Rushikesh during the period from 07 November 2002 to 17 November 2002 in which apart from the Saints and Parshads as many as 1400 devotees from our country as well as from abroad participated.

The foot of Himalayas and the bank of grand sacred river Ganga, these two were added with the divine presence of great saint Pujya Jogi Swami. At such a tri-confluence, who would not wish to join this Shibir?

The Chairman of Rushikesh Paramarth Niketan Ashram, Swami Chidanandji Saraswati Maharaj (Muniji) insisted with great reverence, "Madhavpriya Swami! This time you are to stay here in Paramarth Niketan along with all the participants". In view of the love and insistence of Muniji Maharaj, this Shibir was arranged in the Paramarth Niketan.

From the early morning until midnight, continuous programmes of Bhajan-Smaran, devotion and meditation were arranged. Amongst all these programmes meditation in the morning, bath in the river Ganga at noon, assembly amidst the forest in the afternoon, the divine 'Darshan' of evening 'Aarti' of the River Ganga in big gathering, various festivals at night and 'Satsang' were unforgettable for all.

On 9th Nov.2002, when Jogi swami arrived at the Shibir, the participants felt themselves bathing in the ocean of divine joy. The silent presence of Pujya Jogi Swami could nourish the spirituality in the hearts of all.

Auspicious Memory of Shibir

On 9 November 2002, Jogi Swami gave a 'Berkho' (Mal with few beads) to every Saint and Parshad as a memory of this 'Shibir'. The 'Berkhas' were made of the wood of 'Rayan' tree of village Velal which was blessed by Shreeji Maharaj. Whenever Shree Hari came to Velal, he used to stay at night in the farm of Jesangbhai under this tree. Shree Hari used to sit under the cool shade of this big 'Rayan' tree in the assembly of 500 Paramhans. This shady tree of 'Rayan' is still standing as a witness of several divine deeds of Shree Hari.

In view of this Shibir, Kirtaniya Swami Bhagwathcharandasji, Swami Dharmapriyadasji and Swami Vishwaviharidasji had carefully prepared these 'Berkhas' out of the wood of that 'Rayan' tree well in advance.

When Vishwavihari Swami apprised Jogi Swami about those 'Berkhas', Jogi Swami said, "We will give these 'Berkhas' to the Saints. They would be pleased". When Swami distributed

those 'Berkhas' to the Saints and Parshads, they experienced great joy in their hearts.

The participants of this Shibir immediately got the news that the Saints and Parshads have got 'Berkhas'. The participants thought that it would be good if they also got something as a 'Prasadi' at the hands of Pujya Jogi Swami. To fulfill the wishes of the participant devotees, during the evening meeting in the woods, Jogi Swami gave 'Prasadi' of dry fruits and sugar crystals in plenty to every participant at his own hands. That was not only a 'Prasad' but it was a divine joy of relationship between Swami and Shree Hari distributed by him.

The 'Prasad' was also sent to the assembly of female devotees and the same was distributed among them by Sankhyayogi women disciples.

A Holy Ganaga-Snan

On 11th Nov. 2002 Pujya Swami was specially present at Paramarth Niketan Ghat for Bath in the River Ganga. To take bath in the Ganga easily, a small stream was diverted from mainstream near the steps. A long wall of stone was constructed between both the streams and a big Murti of Gangadhar Mahadev was installed exactly on the opposite of the Ghat. A stage was created nearby for the 'Abhishek' of 'Thakoraji'. A bridge of wood-planks was created over the small flow of the Ganga. The bridge facilitated Jogi Swami and other Saints to come near the stage. The Saints and the participants were singing the verses of 'Vandu Sahajanand Rasrup'. Jogi Swami and other elder Saints performed the 'Abhishek' of Thakoraji with the water of Ganga mixed with saffron as per the rituals. There was a big gathering on the Ghat at that time to have the

'Darshan' of 'Abhishek'. The blessed water of 'Abhishek' was sprinkled over the participants. With the help of submersible pump in the Ganga, the leading Saints sprinkled the water of the Ganga over the devotees freely. The devotees on receiving the benefit of that sprinkle bath felt themselves fulfilled and they became extremely glad.

'Aarti' of Gangaji

It is a great benefit of life to have the divine 'Darshan' of 'Aarti' of great River Ganga in the evening. It is an experience to be remembered forever. As the 'Aarti' of River Ganga is performed at Harki Paidi (a place on the bank of River Ganga in Haridwar) daily in the evening, in the same way a grand 'Aarti' of Ganga is performed at the Ghat of Paramarth Niketan Ashram. A 'Yagna-Kund' is there on the Ghat of Paramarth Niketan Ashram where the Brahmins of the Ashram daily perform the 'Yagna' as per rituals. Thereafter, with the tunes of musical instruments, they chant the Hanuman Chalisa and then they perform 'Aarti' of Ganga-Maiya daily.

Pujya Jogi Swami specially attended the 'Aarti' of Gangaji. The entire atmosphere was divine and beautiful. The Chairman of Paramarth Niketan Ashram, Muniji Maharaj was overwhelmed with joy on the arrival of Pujya Jogi Swami.

Four-five big 'Aartis' with many wicks were lighted along With the chanting of Ved Mantras. At the same time several small 'Aartis' were also lighted. When Pujya Jogi Swami performed 'Aarti' with his own hand, the great River Bhagirathi (Ganga) would be thinking, "O Swami! From whose feet, I am incarnated; you are bearing that Bhagawan Narayan in your heart all the time. You have come to these places of pilgrimage to sanctify the same".

As per daily routine, after 'Aarti' was performed, Muniji did the 'Dhoon' of 'Gopal Bolo Hari Govind Bolo' in a sweet voice with music. He also did Dhoon of Swaminarayan Maha Mantra with love. The big gathering of devotees also responded with love. The sound of this 'Dhoon' was echoing in the sky. The divine sound spread far and wide with the flowing sound of the River Ganga.

Thus, in the auspicious presence of Pujya Jogi Swami, that unique Sadhana Shibir was concluded on 17 November 2002, Sunday.

Epilogue : A Centre of Abiding Faith

Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, Purani Swami Premprakashdasji and Jogi Swami, this trinity of Gurukul had great love and reverence amongst them.

As such, Jogi Swami was totally detached from the dealings of the Gurukul but his indirect contribution to the service activities of the Gurukul is incomparable.

As some ascetic would be constantly performing penance (*Tapasharya*), Jogi Swami, by sitting in a corner of the Gurukul, was doing 'Dhoon-Bhajan' constantly. Because of his devotion and penance, various activities of Gurukul got momentum and Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj received great support.

All these three Saints understood the importance of each other very well. Jogi Swami was doing 'Pooja-Path', was moving Mala and Jap up to noon. At the time of serving 'Thal' to the God in the temple, Jogi Swami used to conclude his Pooja. Thereafter he used to go to the prayer hall for the 'Darshan'

and then he used to go to the seat of Gurudev. Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj would be waiting for him eagerly.

When Jogi Swami would arrive, Shastri Swami would speak with due respect and love, "See, the Jogi has come". Those words would be full of love.

Some times Gurudev himself would come to the place of Jogi Swami and would talk to him.

Sadguru Mahant Swami had advised him, "Jogi! After my departure for Akshardham, you should live in the 'Kul' (Gurukul).

On the words of his Guru Mahant Swami, Jogi Swami is residing in Gurukul for many years and he has made Gurukul a place of penance. Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj, with great love and reverence, had made this great Saint agreed to stay in Gurukul.

I remember an incident showing love and reverence in between these two great Saints. Once, Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj was suffering from continuous severe hiccups. Due to continuous hiccups day and night, he was unable to take food and water and even unable to sleep. Gurudev was in advanced age at that time and fell weak. He had fever also. Moreover, these hiccups caused great trouble for him. Gurudev was a patient and tolerant great Saint. So he did not express his pain, but due to the pain of Gurudev, the entire Gurukul family was afflicted and worried. The Saints and the students were praying to Shree Hari with 'Dhoon-Bhajan' to cure Gurudev. Despite many treatments, the hiccupping could not be cured.

Some Vaidyaraj (Ayurvedic Doctor) recommended, "Swami! If you would take the burnt ashes of peacock's feathers, hiccups would be cured". However, Shastriji Maharaj strongly

refused saying, "The remains of peacock's feathers could be considered an animal product. We cannot take that because we would incur the sin of eating flesh". Shastriji Maharaj was very strict in observance of his rules under any adverse situation. The difficulty of hiccups lasted long.

Once it was 10 O'clock in the morning. Gurudev was sitting on his seat. In the meanwhile, Jogi Swami, after finishing his Pooja, came for the 'Darshan' of Shastriji Maharaj.

Jogi Swami asked Shastriji Maharaj, "Swami! Do these hiccups trouble you much?"

Shastriji Maharaj said, "Yes Jogi! See, it is not yet cured". As the cow loves her calf, Jogi Swami, with love, saw at the throat and chest of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj.

Gurudev said, "Jogi! You are a pious Saint. Please pray to Maharaj, so that the hiccups could be cured".

Jogi Swami said, "Swami! I will pray to Maharaj".

Jogi Swami came down to his seat, placed 'Thakoraji' in front of him, lighted a lamp and started continuous 'Jap'.

Shree Hari listened to his prayer. The hiccups which were troubling Gurudev for so many days, surprisingly got cured. The entire Gurukul family became extremely happy. Thus, the relationship between these two great Saints was unique.

After the departure of Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj for Akshardham, Jogi Swami became much dejected. As he had great affection for Gurudev, he became restless.

Sometimes Jogi Swami would say, in a tone of sadness, "See! Purani has left, Shastriji has also left. Now I don't want to live in this world".

On hearing such words from Jogi Swami, everyone in Gurukul family experienced pain. All were worried because Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj was like father of Gurukul family, whereas Purani Swami and Jogi Swami were regarded as mothers of Gurukul family.

Purani Swami left for Akshardham earlier. Then Gurudev left for Akshardham and now if Jogi Swami also left the entire Gurukul family would feel supportless.

The Saints and Parshads were praying from their hearts to Maharaj, "O Maharaj! Please remove gloom of Swami".

Shree Hari listened to the prayer coming from the depth of everyone's heart. Therefore, with His divine inspiring power, He slowly removed the gloom of Swami. Shree Hari showed compassion on countless salvation seeking souls and let Jogi Swami to be with us.

In 30th Vachanamrut of Gadhada Antya (Last Canto), Shree Hari has said, "If I become gloomy and indifferent, I would go away from this body. That is why I know that I should not be gloomy or indifferent because in my proximity these male and female devotees gladly worship God. That is good. I am happy to see them all doing devotion. All human beings are mortal but doing devotion is a great benefit of life".

Almost due to this reason, Swami is living with us. Not only that, but after the departure of Gurudev for Akshardham, in the interest of 'Satsang', Swami has changed his attitude unexpectedly. Earlier Swami remained more and more within self but now he remains with the surrounding to some extent.

Despite remaining totally detached from the dealings of the Gurukul, as the pulse of the heart keeps the heart functioning, Swami has kept all the service activities of the Gurukul live.

Jogi Swami is an incomparable centre of faith for 150 Saints and Parshads of Gurukul.

'We are to please Jogi Swami, not to displease him in any way', this is only volition of Gurukul family that has kept alive and progressing all the service activities of the Gurukul.

The Saints and Parshads of various branches of Gurukul, always wish that Swami should live with them. Swami also visits the branches of Gurukul to fulfill their desire.

Whenever Swami arrives in any branch, service activities and devotion get increased to a great extent. Though Swami would remain silent, his devotional and penance-full presence, gives momentum to the several benevolent and spiritual pious activities beyond imagination.

As the moon nourishes herbal plants and trees, mere presence of Swami would nourish the Gurukul's food-donation, educational and devotional (*Anna-dan*, *Vidya-dan* and *Abhay-dan*, surrender to God) activities. Thus after the departure of Gurudev for Akshardham, Jogi Swami has become the incomparable centre of abiding faith for the entire Gurukul family.

As the 'Meru' is a bigger bead, which remains at the centre of the Mala, Jogi Swami is like a 'Meru' in the Mala like group of Saints of Gurukul and he is maintaining his Mala with an invisible string of love wonderfully. May Shree Hari keep him with us for a long time to come for our spiritual upliftment. It is our earnest prayer to Shree Hari. At this age, now Swami mostly remains engrossed in the Maharaj within him. He does not know whether his life story is written or printed. He does not care, yet I feel myself fortunate to have an occasion to complete this life story of him, in his presence with us.

In accordance with the foreign tour

Appendix - I

The Land of Immigrants - Super Power of the World

America can be considered a country of immigrants. The original inhabitants of America have been marginalised. The immigrants who came from various countries of Europe have usurped their land and made it their own.

Once, the people of Europe were facing various types of hardships. The north Europe remains covered with ice. The other parts of Europe also were facing harsh seasons and the cultivable land was limited. In the adverse situations, the people of Europe were struggling hard for their existence. The whole continent was divided into small countries. The conflicts and intrigue amongst these countries were at their extreme.

The people were considering themselves Christians, but in the name of religion, dark superstitions were prevailing. The religion had become a part of political game. There were several factions in Christianity. The people had to struggle constantly to maintain themselves and it brought in benefit for them. The calamities and struggles made them tough and adventurous. To maintain their existence, migration was a must. However, it was difficult by land route. Most of the land areas joining the continents were covered by ice. The migration or trade with other countries through these routes was extremely difficult at that time. Only the sea route was open for migration. Therefore, the navigation activity developed to a great extent. The

adventurous people started sailing through the oceans and discovered new countries and places.

However, if the people can understand, the hardships are great gifts of God to the human race. As the carpenter gives shape to a log of wood, the hardships give shape to the human race; develop his spirit to fight the odds to overcome difficulties. Our people of Kutch and Saurashtra also, due to several natural calamities, have migrated to and settled in many foreign countries and have become wealthy and happy.

The natural and geographical calamities of Europe have shaped its people as strong and adventurous. They invented many things to make life easy. They opened up new horizons of knowledge and scientific research.

When Europe was struggling with the hardships, India was considered to be a country of Gold. The wealth of India attracted and inspired several adventurous people to discover it. Columbus was on a voyage to discover India but instead of India, he discovered vast American continent, which was like a wonderful treasure of nature.

In this land, the Red Indians were living. In the South of this continent, Maya civilisation had bloomed. The history of Maya civilisation is very interesting. The research on this civilisation leads us to believe that these people would have migrated to this area from Indian sub-continent or middle Asia. The body structure of these people is alike to that of Asian people. There are so many words of Indian languages in the language of these people.

We can speculate that the ancestors of these people, might have travelled from Mid-Asia through the routes of North Pole and might have come down to this area and settled there.

These Maya people and Red-Indians lived with the nature of this land. They were illiterate and superstitious. They had no ambition for expansion of their area. They were content with what they were getting from the nature. The situation was just like ignorant beggars sleeping on some inexhaustible treasure. Due to an adventurous voyage of Columbus, the American continent was discovered. For the Europeans, this discovery opened up a door of the treasure of Kuber (treasurer of heaven). In other words, we can say that the doors of a great historical and open robbery were opened up.

The Gangs of so called civilised but in fact barbarians coming from Europe, oppressed the local inhabitants. They killed thousands of men, women and children of local population. With an intention to grab (local inhabitants') wealth, they massacred them. The guns became victorious against the arrows and the bows. The story of destruction of Maya civilisation is heart shaking.

The people who lived in the forest peacefully in the lap of nature were oppressed and massacred like animals. Was Columbus an adventurer or a barbarian robber? Let us leave the question for the critics.

The world history is not like a chaste woman but it is like a beautiful celestial damsel. She weds only to the victorious and moves in the centre of power and wealth.

The only exception is the history written by Bhagawan Ved Vyas. The writer of Mahabharata was totally unprejudiced. The world has never seen such a true historian.

During our tour of America in the year 2003, we happened to visit Alaska with Shree Niranjanshai Vyas. There is an Alaskan Heritage Centre in Anchorage, the capital of

Alaska. We went to see the centre. Here it is being shown, how the original inhabitants of Alaska were! Their homes, dresses, art and culture have been shown here exactly as they were. Original Alaska people work here as guides and the artists and they collect funds for the maintenance of this centre.

In this Heritage Centre, one Alaskan person was giving demonstration of wonderful virtues of Alaskan herbs. We asked him, "Which religion do you observe?"

He said, "We observe Christianity."

We again asked him, "Christianity came to your country two or three centuries ago only. What was your religion before that?"

On hearing our question, that Alaskan gentleman was shaken. His face became harsh. He said, "Our only religion was to live in the lap of Mother Nature. We lived according to the rules of nature. We struggled for our existence in the adverse climate prevailing here but our life was full of love and joy. These immigrants attacked us and snatched everything from us. They destroyed our language, culture and religion." The words of that Alaskan gentleman were full of anger against the immigrant invaders.

The immigrants took over America. Passing through various rise and fall and wars among the people, the country continued its progress towards prosperity, due to the best political system and wise and prudent leaders.

Top priority was given to education and research. With the help of knowledge and science, America became the first super power of the world. The country became incomparable with its economic and military power. Due to the resources in

abundance, the moral values of Christianity have grown very well here.

India has much to learn from America. In the year 1978, I happened to go to America with Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj for the first time. At that time, my views about America were full of prejudice. As a slum dweller envies the people living in bungalows and talks about the philosophy of true life.

When I had a biased mind, I had thought that there could be no country greater than India. My India is great and all other countries are atheistic, irreligious and engrossed in sensual pleasures. They have no knowledge of spirituality. However, when I happened to visit America frequently, my prejudice slowly disappeared. I got a view to see the world with open eyes. Like a cyclone, a thought arose in my mind. In the name of religion, we consider our country a great one. We talk much about religion and give long discourses on religion. It is a rule of scriptures that where there is religion, peace and prosperity would be there, then why do poverty and unrest exist in our country? Why such a great country like India became political slave of England? Why was its wealth looted? What has made America a prosperous and powerful country?

America is not without religion. As we have temples, there are many churches and temples in America. As we go to the temple, these people go to the church. They go to the church once a week on Sunday but they go with full faith and reverence. We go to the temple daily but without due faith and reverence.

Many a time I think that our faith has become a hypocrisy and stuff-less thing. The monopoly has bloomed in the name of religion. The rational and scientific view has been lost in the sphere of religion. We write aphorisms of religion on the walls but not in the heart, (means do not follow it).

There must be some reasons, which have made America prosperous and powerful. If we have to regain our glory, we will have to think where and why we failed. We will have to regain our ancient wisdom and values, which are forgotten since centuries, and we will have to learn the lessons from the developed countries for the development of our economy. We will have to free ourselves from the self-deceit that 'we are great'.

During my visits to America, I could understand that 'where traffic is OK, everything is OK.' In America, the citizens abide by the rules. There are innumerable vehicles in America. Almost everyone has a car there. The car-owning ratio is almost one and a half car per person. On the other hand, the arrangements of traffic control are also equally good. It does not mean that there is no problem of traffic jam but immediate solution is there. There is perfect planning and execution.

In our great country, what to say about traffic? On the cross roads, the vehicles would assemble from four sides and no one would clear the road for others to go. No one would let others to go. They will snarl at each other but none will give way to others. No one is ready to retreat.

In the villages and cities, in the state assemblies as well as in the parliament, in government offices also, everywhere traffic-jam is there. Resultantly the progress of the country is hampered. As the river Ganga was confused in the matted locks of Mahadev, our progress is confused in the Government offices.

I want to mention one or two funny things in our country. In our great country, the citizens enjoy full freedom. Not only citizens, our cows and buffaloes also enjoy full freedom to move anywhere on the road and in the streets and play- grounds. As the union of strikers, they can block the roads and can arrange

meetings wherever they want. They can arrange 'Aarti' or 'Namaj' on the roads or highways. Nobody dares to stop them.

As I am talking about the freedom, let me tell you one more funny thing. In America, the citizens do not have the liberty as the citizens have got in India. In America, the citizens have no right to spit here and there and to throw waste anywhere. If anyone violates the rule, immediately the police would be there to fine a thousand dollars. Whereas in India, any citizen can do these things anywhere and none would dare to stop that fellow because the people believe that liberty to do these things is their birthright.

Keeping aside this light talk, let us come to the point. The people who do not observe the traffic rules, do not keep their public places clean, shall not dream to be a Super Power.

In 'Shikshapatri' Bhagawan Swaminarayan has given a command to His followers not to create dirt here and there. Forget about the general public, to what extent our 'Satsangis' are aware in this regard? In America, these rules are strictly followed and therefore America is a neat and clean country like heaven.

In America, there are different types of dangerous waste heaps, creating dangerous problem for entire human race. It has polluted the atmosphere of our entire earth. These dirt-heaps means medical waste, chemical waste and atomic waste. The poisonous gases are destroying the ozone layer, protecting the vegetation and living beings. Unfortunately, the developed countries have no scientific solutions to the same. In other words, we can say that these dangerous dirt-heaps are the by-products of so-called scientific progress, which has endangered the entire world. Our dung-heaps are not so dangerous. Our dunghills

are surely damaging the public health but if we develop a skill to manage these dunghills, they can give us useful fertilizers and manures. Then these dunghills could prove to be beneficial to the life cycle. However, dirt heaps of America can persecute the human-race. Let us hope that by keeping the pace of progress, the human race would be able to find out solution to this grave problem or else some mysterious reaction would end this entire process.

There is one more dangerous dirt-heap in America, more dangerous than the one mentioned above. That is wantonness in the name of freedom. No branch of science has any solution to it. Even the nature has no solution. These dirt-heaps of licentiousness have created a disease of resorting to the material pleasures. This wantonness is swallowing America.

Only India has the solution to this problem. No other but the spiritual values of India can rescue that nation from that grave trouble. Therefore, synthesis between the civilisations is a must.

God has showered immense wealth on America. It is a piece of land so vast that the Sun takes at least three hours to pass over that land. Alaska, a region of America is situated near the North Pole. It has six months day and six months night like in heaven.

In America, there are lakes of sweet water as large as seas. There are long rivers having perennial flow in all the seasons. It has a large storage of oil deposits and inexhaustible wealth of minerals. America has the control over large seas full of wealth. The population is considerably less in comparison to the size of the country. The people work sincerely with a plan and a vision.

The country has everything. The God has given with his thousand hands to this country. The God has also given to the people of this country the ability and intelligence to protect and to maintain this wealth. The people have foresight and skill to increase the wealth.

As such, India is also not less graced by the God. Certain things, which we have, others rarely bear. Well-balanced seasons, natural resources in great extent, which is full of varieties, are some of them. Our country has certainly done progress but increasing population is eating up the fruits of our progress. Due to the power-oriented politics, the population growth could not be controlled. Certain sections of population do not believe in birth control.

China has overcome the population problem and now it is competing with America in several spheres. Whereas in India, crores of people are unemployed. God only can save this country.

It appears that our people have lost the zeal and skill of planning. In addition to it, the poison of corruption has spread in the system. India is in trouble due to its own sins. The sin has spread in the social, political and even in religious sphere.

In earlier centuries, India was at the top of the world. The Gurukuls had perpetuated the traditions of furthering the branches of knowledge and science. The people from many countries came to India to learn the lessons of culture and civilisation. But now the situation is different. India herself has a strayed from its original sources and it is unfortunate for India.

Greater than its natural wealth, India has an incomparable wealth of spiritual thinking and metaphysics. The glory of American wealth looks dim in comparison to it.

Bhagawat Geeta, Upanishads etc. scriptures are invaluable treasures of India.

There may be many things worthy of learning from America. However, America does not have the comprehensive and deep vision of human life, which India has. Therefore, despite being rich, America is poor and despite being poor, India is rich. Therefore, the people of India have to develop a sense of self-respect. By deep thinking, we will have to correct our mistakes and therefore, we will have to inculcate a vision to learn many things from other countries.

If we can make sum total of auspicious elements developed in various parts of the world, we can realise the dream of Maharshi Arvind i.e. to incarnate on the earth the empire of fully developed living spirit of super consciousness.

Let me tell you one more thing. In our country, the people talk about the increasing spread of Indian culture in America. Many religious centers, temples and organisations are established. It is a wide spread belief that our people abroad are putting in great efforts to maintain the heritage of our religion. It may be true to some extent. But believe me; many Indians in America are backward in the matter of religion.

In the name of religion, the waste of religion is dumped there. There are *Bhuvras* (so called intermediates of God) playing their arts and the Goddesses coming into the human body of intermediates. There are Indians who believe in knowing the reasons of their miseries through such 'Bhuvras' who pretend to tell through 'corns'. The worst is the curse of divisiveness of castes on the Indian culture. In America also, the Indians are not free of it.

The Indians who are settled there are well educated and perhaps due to the same reason, they believe themselves supreme and plenty of times create prestige issues. Free atmosphere of America has given air to this fire. Here two persons cannot live together by giving up their ego with a spirit to let go. Those persons may be husband and wife or may be leaders of a temple. When they cannot work together, they start different centers like dead investment.

India is a vast country; hence, the impact of divisions could hardly be seen. Population is also vast and everyone can get a crowd of people, which is as good as oxygen, necessary to live. However, in America, where our people are in less numbers, the effect of division would immediately come to surface. The great personalities exported from India to this country, instead of making them to live and work together, they keep them divided to achieve their aim. I pray to Shree Hari, "O Hari! Please make our Hindu people free from the curse of divisiveness".

Appendix - II

Problems in the Sphere of Religion in Abroad

I would like to discuss some additional points relating to my foreign tour. Our Indian people have worked hard to develop the religious attitude abroad but in the sphere of religion abroad, there are many problems arising due to ignorance.

If the religious leaders give up their divisive attitude, peace would prevail in the society. But only God knows when that dream would come true. If the society is divided in many

factions, the religious leaders are mostly responsible for the same. Short sight and short time self interest have divided the Indian society in many factions and resultantly it has become weak.

The requirement of the day is to synthesis these factions in one stream, like a garland consisting flowers of different colours and shades. If the Indian people are suffering today, the reason is absence of unity. The so-called leaders have weakened the unity very much to achieve their motives. It is bad luck of our society.

In the sphere of religion, one more thing is pinching me constantly. If true understanding could be developed in the people who gather in the temple, real religious-revolution could take place. However, most of the people do not know why they go to the temple. Sometimes they go to the temple, as they go to stroll in the market or as they go to see a museum. Thus, religious crowd can be created but a society of true religious people cannot be created. If religious understanding and awareness is developed in the people, then only religious society can be created.

In foreign countries, particularly in western countries, the young generation is greatly affected by the atmosphere of sensual enjoyment prevailing there due to the objects of material happiness easily available there. In this situation, it is very difficult to maintain the virtues of religion. The gap of languages has made it extremely difficult to make co-ordination with the new generation.

Our new generation abroad is required to be given religious knowledge, beside the knowledge of Mother tongue, in the language they understand. We will not be able to give them the understanding about our religion and virtues fully only with our mother tongue. It is a fact.

The Indian child born abroad could learn Indian language for their limited usage but the same cannot serve the purpose.

It is also difficult to create interest in the hearts of the new generation to learn all these. Our new generation abroad is living in such an atmosphere that requires great skill, understanding and penance to inspire them to maintain our religion and virtues.

Jay Swaminarayan

www.swaminarayangurukul.org



“Chant holy names of God by heart and with devotion. It is more beneficial”.

-Pujya Jogi Swami

- The life of Jogi Swami is the combination of JAP and TAP
- The life of Jogi Swami is completely free from materialistic desires and worldly pleasure.
- Almighty God constantly resides in the heart of Jogi Swami.
- Many times Jogi Swami got realization of God and Almighty God often has taken care of him.
- Jogi Swami is full with divine power by the grace of great spiritual master sadguru Mahant Swami. But the uniqueness of Jogi Swami is that he never used it for himself to earn wealth, pride or prestige.
- The aim of writing this ‘life of Jogi Swami’ is not to praise Jogi Swami but to praise and express gratitude towards the Supreme reality whose divine power works everywhere and which is beyond our intellect.
- The life of Jogi Swami is like an extremely clean mirror. We can see the Divine and Supreme Reality One through him.

“Jogi Swami is so powerful Guru who can change impossible things into possible”.

www.sgvp.org Dr. Alexander (Chancellor, USCA, USA)

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